BACK “HOME”: THREE ESSAYS ON MEXICAN RETURN MIGRANTS AND MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN’S ASSIMILATION IN MEXICO.

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BACK “HOME”: THREE ESSAYS ON MEXICAN RETURN MIGRANTS AND MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN’S ASSIMILATION IN MEXICO.

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This dissertation studies how transnationalism, understood as the process of building cross-national relationship, identities, and practices (Levitt and Schiller 2004), affects the children of migrants—those who were born in the country of destination of their parents—when they resettle in their parental homeland. Specifically, I use the case of Mexican-American children who resettle in Mexico. This dissertation is structured in a three paper format.

In the first paper, “When things go south: Economic shocks and changes in the composition of return migration," I use cluster analysis to study the connection between return migration and changes in economic conditions in the country of destination. Data for this study come from a Mexican household survey. My results suggest changes in the composition of return migration in the wake of the 2008 economic crisis. The changes were driven by variations among the prevalence of two different profiles of labor migrants.

In the second paper, “*Mi casa es tu casa?* [My house is your house?]: Transnational Practices and the Integration of Children of Return Migrants in their Ancestral Country”, I explore the role of transnationalism in the incorporation of children of return migrants. I develop a theoretical approach that builds on Nee and Sanders’ (2001) forms-of-capital model of immigrant incorporation by including transnational networks, practices, and identities. To highlight the diversity in incorporation paths, I use ideal types, which I contrast with qualitative data from 49 semi-structured interviews with Mexican-American children and members of their network that I collected in Zacatecas during the summer of 2017.

In the third paper, “Transnational networks in the community and the incorporation of foreign-born children of return migrants in their ancestral land. The case of Mexican-American children in Mexico”, I use a mixed-methods approach to analyze how transnational community networks influence school enrollment among Mexican-American children. I find that Mexican-American children in areas with a strong migration tradition are more likely to attend school than those in areas with less migration. I suggest normalization, social support, and institutionalization of resources as the mechanisms behind that connection.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Maria de Lourdes Ramirez Flores was born and raised in Mexico City. Before her time at Cornell she worked in consulting in Mexico City. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from the Instituto Tecnologico Autonomo de Mexico.

To Michiel, Mom, and Adriana

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INTRODUCTION

Stories of migration—ranging from family lore to nationalist constructs—captivate the social imagination. Most of the time, people imagine the story of someone—usually a man, hence the use of pronouns ahead—who leaves behind his home in search for a brighter future. After much hard work, battles with language and cultural barriers—and maybe encounters with racism—, the immigrant successfully settles in. The story continues with his children and grandchildren—born in the new generous land—, who enjoy a middle-class life and opportunities that would be unimaginable in the land of their ancestors.

In this dissertation, I explore a very different side of the story. I study how transnationalism, understood as the process of building cross-national relationship, identities, and practices (Levitt and Schiller 2004), affects the children of migrants—those who were born in the country of destination of their parents—when they resettle in their ancestral homeland. The overall goal of this dissertation is to understand, in the context of return migration, how transnational practices, identities, and networks shape the incorporation process of the foreign-born children of return migrants. Altogether, this dissertation contributes to the field of Sociology by showing how transnational cultural dynamics influence membership in communities. Specifically, it contributes to the subfields of Sociology of Migration and Transnationalism by expanding our understanding of two phenomena: return migration and the intersection between transnationalism and the incorporation of the foreign-born children of return migrants in their country of ancestry. Given the large number of international migrants—as of 2017, about 258 million worldwide (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division 2017), 44.5 million of them in the US (Zong, Batalova and Burrow 2019)—, understanding the conditions under which they go back home and what happens to their children when they do is critical.

In this dissertation, I study how the US-born children of Mexican immigrants, henceforward Mexican-American children, incorporate in Mexico. Mexico and the US share a long and complicated history, an almost-2000-mile border, deeply interwoven economies, and a diaspora of over 37 million of Mexican immigrants and people of Mexican descent. Data shows that most Mexican immigrants have been in the US for a long time: 60% arrived before 2000, and about 30% arrived between 2001 and 2009 (Zong and Batalova 2018). Like other foreign-born and native-born groups, Mexican immigrants have formed families in the US—as of 2017, about 7 million second-generation children living in the US had at least one Mexican-born parent (Childtrends 2018).

Since the 2008 economic crisis, Mexican migration to the US has gone through important changes. While Mexicans are still the largest immigrant group in the US—as of 2017, they accounted for about 25% of the foreign-born population—, the total number of Mexican migrants has been decreasing since the 2008 Recession (Zong and Batalova 2018). Data from the 2014 Mexican National Survey of Demographic Dynamics (ENADID) shows that between 2009 and 2014, one million Mexicans and their families—including their US-born children—went from the US to Mexico (Gonzalez-Barrera 2015). As of 2015, data from the Mexican Intercensal Survey shows that about 784,300 Mexican-American children aged 0 to 17 years lived in Mexico. Studies show that Mexican-American children are an invisible and vulnerable population in schools (Medina and Menjivar 2015; Jacobo-Suarez 2017; Zuniga et al. 2016), but our knowledge on this population is still minimal. Given trends in return migration and the current political discourse in the US, research on Mexican return migration and Mexican-American children in the US is timely.

This dissertation is structured in a three-paper format. Each paper has its introduction, literature review, methodology section, results, and conclusions. In these introductory pages, I provide the reader with a general overview of the literature and concepts that serve as the

foundation for this research, and I introduce the three papers and how they contribute to the literature in my fields of study.

Return Migration and Economic Conditions

Let us think again about the story of the male migrant who left his home in search of a better life. In places like the US, a story like this is often the backbone of family identity: a grandparent or earlier ancestor came to the US to pursue the American Dream. Of course, we hear these stories more often because those immigrants and their descendants surround us. In contrast with the longstanding scholarly fascination with migration, there has been less work on return migration—although the phenomenon started catching scholarly attention at the turn of the century (Klinthäll 2006).

In broad terms, the vast literature on migration depicts a complex phenomenon driven by a wide variety of factors and may involve more than one movement between the country of origin and destination. Research shows that people leave their homeland for a myriad of reasons—some do it for economic reasons, others for political purposes, others to save their lives, and others to join family members who migrated at an earlier point (e.g., Garip 2016; Massey, Durand and Malone 2002; Massey and Garcia Espana 1987; Ranis and Fei 1961). In the last two decades, scholars have come to understand that part of the complexity of migration is that it often involves more than a one-way movement from a country of origin to a country of destination, and that returnees are a diverse group—economic returnees, political returnees, asylees, people whose return is connected to the life cycle, etc. (Cassarino 2004; Davies, Borland, Blake and West 2011; Yueya 2014). One of the most intriguing questions in the literature is the connection between economic factors and return migration.

There are two broad categories of research on economic factors and conditions of return migration. The first is shaped by labor economics, and it explores how economic factors such

as employment conditions and relative prices in the countries of origin and destination, as well as the accumulation of human capital shape an individual's decision to return to her country of birth (Constant and Massey 2005; Dustmann and Weiss 2007; Thomas 2008). The second uses demographic methods to measure the number of people who decide to return during economic crises in the country of destination (Bastia 2011; Beets and Willekens 2009; Camarota and Jensenius 2009; Passel and Cohn 2009; Rendall, Brownell and Kups 2011; Zaiceva and Zimmermann 2016). However, none of these positions explains a crucial question: How do changes in economic conditions alter the *composition* of return migration?

Research on migration shows that specific economic and social conditions affect who migrates (Garip 2016), and though something similar likely happens with return migration, the issue remains unexplored. Decision-based economic models explicitly acknowledge individual differences in the motivation for return migration, but they fail to explain the role of large economic shocks on the composition of the migrant population. Demographic research explicitly acknowledges the effects of an economic crisis on the magnitude of return migration but does not address the issue of diversity within the flow.

In the first paper of this dissertation, "When things go south: Economic shocks and changes in the composition of return migration," I analyze the connection between return migration and changes in economic conditions in the country of destination by looking at Mexican migration. Data for this study comes from the Mexican National Survey of Occupation and Employment (*Encuesta Nacional de Ocupacion y Empleo*) for the years between 2005 and 2012. However, it is essential to note that return migration—voluntary or involuntary—peaked in 2006/2007, and that it declined afterward, and that I focus on the composition and not the magnitude of the flow. I use cluster analysis to explore the main profiles of return migrants and their prevalence before and after the 2008 economic recession. Four of the six main profiles I found correspond to labor migrants, who vary by age, educational attainment, family structure,

and rural residence. The two remaining are young students from wealthier households who return after a period abroad and young girls who are sent back to their extended families.

My results suggest changes in the composition of return migration driven by variations among the prevalence of two different profiles of labor migrants—most of whom are working-age males who are potentially returning with their families and by an apparent increase in the share young educated returnees. The first profile of labor returnees is what I call the archetypal labor migrant—a man in his thirties or early forties, with low educational attainment comes from a state that has a strong migration tradition. In the period of study, I observed a clear decrease in the prevalence of these returnees. The second profile is the urban laborer, who is similar in educational and income to archetypal migrants but comes from urban areas in non-traditional sending states. My data shows a slight increase in the prevalence of these returnees. Finally, the group that showed the most significant rise was the accommodated youth, who are urban men with high educational attainment and returned to their parental home.

Besides its contribution to our understanding of return migration, my results have important policy implications. Given that economic shocks in the country of destination can push working-age migrants to return, governments in the countries of origin need to design policies that help returnees reincorporate in the labor market. Furthermore, due to the age of these returnees, governments need to consider providing public services for migrants and their families.

Immigrant Incorporation

My second and third papers, which I describe in detail ahead, explore different aspects of immigrant incorporation and how transnationalism shapes the integration of Mexican-American children in Mexico. Though these children are ethnically Mexican and may have connections to Mexico, their nativity and citizenship status, exposure to mainstream US culture

and institutions, and life experiences as part of a diaspora set them apart from the native-born population. In addition, their citizenship status often becomes a legal obstacle to access public services, and anti-American feelings among bureaucrats may add to their struggles. By immigrant incorporation, I refer to the process by which the individuals who migrate integrate into the receiving country (Nee and Sanders 2001). I do not use or attempt to explain immigrant assimilation, which refers to the multigenerational process by which ethnic lines are blurred, and immigrant groups become a part of the mainstream society in the country of reception (Alba and Nee 2005). In other words, I am interested in how those who arrive navigate their new home, not on how lines between immigrant groups and the mainstream society blur with every passing generation.

There is a rich body of literature that studies how immigrants settle in their country of destination. Some of the most relevant studies have explored the role of factors such as social capital and networks (e.g., Hagan 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007), racialization and ethnicity (Jimenez 2008), gender (Itzighson and Silvia Giorguli-Saucedo 2005), laws and institutions (Bean, Brown and Bachmeier 2015), labor market and structural economic conditions (Abramitzky and Boustan 2017; Munshi 2003), schools (Gonzales 2015), and enclaves and geographical location (Logan, Alba and Stults 2003; Nee and Sanders 1987). Although some of these studies analyze a combination of factors—like different types of capital (Sanders and Nee 2001) considering variation by gender (Hagan 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007; Itzighson and Silvia Giorguli-Saucedo 2005)—most of them focus on a specific element instead of approaching incorporation using a holistic theoretical perspective.

To my knowledge, there have been two primary efforts to theorize incorporation by looking at the interactions between several mechanisms. The first one is the forms-of-capital model developed by Victor Nee and Jimy Sanders (2001), states that the labor market outcomes of immigrants are a function of the social, financial, and human-cultural capital of their families.

The second approach comes from Jose Itzighson and Silvia Giorguli-Saucedo's (2005) research on gender differences in immigrant incorporation. Although their work focuses on gender, it is framed using a theoretical model in the form of a structural equation. This model describes the outcome of incorporation as the interaction of seven broad variables—exposure to mainstream society, socioeconomic status, experiences of discrimination, satisfaction with opportunities in the country of destination, economic and sociocultural transnationalisms, and perceived distance to mainstream society.

In this dissertation, I argue that to understand how immigrants from transnational communities incorporate in their ancestral home, we need a new framing that factors in the role of transnational networks, practices, and identities in addition to family resources. Concerning how newcomers integrate into the country of destination, both Nee and Sanders' (2001) and Itzighson and Giorguli-Saucedo's (2005) work emphasize the simultaneous importance of several types of capital, experiences—which can be thought as a human-cultural capital—and perceptions of distance with the mainstream society. However, these models are based on the assumption that immigrants are foreign, which is not entirely the case for foreign-born children of return migrants—especially for those who belong to large transnational communities. It is important to note that, although Itzighson and Giorguli-Saucedo consider transnationalism, their study does not consider different aspects of transnationalism, such as social connections, practices, and identities.

Transnationalism

Although the existence of transnationalism as a phenomenon is widely accepted, there are heated debates regarding its conceptual definition. Scholars of migration—specifically, anthropologists—began using the term in the early 1990s to describe the relations that immigrants maintained with people in their homeland (Portes 2001; Vertovec 1999; Waldinger

2015). One of the discussions centered on whether or not the phenomenon was novel or needed to be defined, and scholars argued that increasing ability for mass communication made transnationalism a separate phenomenon that required a conceptual definition (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999). A critical debate—particularly relevant for this dissertation—is centered on the type of activities that can be considered transnational and the relevance of these activities in the lives of the children of immigrants (Kasinitz et al. 2002; Levitt and Waters 2002; Rumbaut 2002)

The first position on what counts as transnationalism constrains the definition to a narrow set of activities and excludes day to day interactions. Alejandro Portes, Luis Guarnizo, and Patricia Landolt define transnationalism as those "occupations and activities that require regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders" (1999, 219). Furthermore, in his typology of transnational activities, Portes (2001) constrains his focus to be political, economic, and sociocultural activities. In addition, his typology of transnational activities explicitly limits transnational actors to grassroots movements and immigrant organizations—including commercial enterprises.

The narrow definition of transnationalism embraced by Portes and his colleagues, though elegant and theoretically robust, is problematic for two reasons. First, it limits transnationalism to a small set of activities that only more privileged immigrants can take part in (see Guarnizo, Portes and Haller 2003) and it ignores the evidence that, while participation in any one type of transnational activity is low, if we look at involvement across different types then engagement in cross-border activities is high (Itzighson and Giorguli-Saucedo 2002). Second, it excludes cross-national activities such as phone calls or seasonal visits, which strengthen transnational social networks and have profound effects on the lives of immigrants and their families (Orellana 2001; Smith 2006).

In contrast with the narrow activity-based definition discussed above, Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller (2004) define transnationalism as a process by which immigrants build social fields—interlocking networks of social relations— that connect their country of origin and their country of destination. As part of their definition, Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) emphasize the need to differentiate between the transnational networks in which migrants are embedded—social fields—, their transnational activities—ways of being—, and their transnational identities—ways of belonging.

Throughout this dissertation, I use Levitt and Schiller's (2004) approach to understanding transnationalism due to three main reasons. The first one is that framing individuals within social fields emphasizes that transnationalism occurs within a social array that extends beyond social networks, as social institutions are a crucial part of transnational connections (Glick Schiller, Basch and Stanton Salazar 1992). The second advantage is that the definition recognizes the value of day-to-day practices that strengthen transnational networks. An example is phone calls, which have a crucial role in building and reinforcing transnational connections and are significant for immigrants (Orellana 2001; Smith 2006). Finally, by making a distinction between activities and identities, we can explore what people do and how they identify as separate elements.

Research shows that ethnic identity alone does not grant membership in ethnic communities and that migrants often struggle with incorporating in their country of ancestry. Frequently, the native-born population labels ethnic migrants as foreign because of their place of birth, linguistic skills, and lack of cultural competency (De Bree et al. 2010; Tsuda 2009). Furthermore, sometimes, children who migrate to their place of ancestry cannot access basic services like education due to legal, economic, and social barriers imposed by governments and the mainstream society (Medina and Menjivar 2015; Tsuda 2009).

In Mexico, Mexican-American children struggle with nativist attitudes and barriers to access services like education. Though those with substantial transnational connections can use their skills and networks to navigate the day-to-day during holiday visits (Smith 2006), those who resettle in Mexico encounter difficulties. Among other problems, Mexican-American children encounter high expectations of cultural and linguistic competency and strong anti-American feelings (Zuniga et al. 2016). They also face considerable bureaucratic and social barriers to access education. Though the Mexican government reformed the legal framework to facilitate school enrollment in 2015, in some schools, some bureaucrats still require official apostilled documents—an expensive and time-consuming requisite—despite changes to the law (Medina and Menjivar 2015; Roman Gonzalez et al. 2016; Jacobo-Suarez 2017).

The complications to the education of Mexican-American children do not end with successful school enrollment. In the classroom, Mexican-American children encounter a system that is not designed for people without Spanish literacy skills, and teachers and administrators penalize them for lack of Mexico-centered academic knowledge. As a result, these children battle with academic requirements, have frustrating and inadequate learning experiences, and experience feelings of isolation (Jacobo-Suarez 2017; Zuniga and Hamann 2009, 2015; Zuniga et al. 2016). However, as this summary shows, studies have focused on the numerous obstacles Mexican-American children face and not on the overall process of their incorporation—including the individual and community factors that help them thrive. This dissertation addresses that gap.

In the second paper of this dissertation, "Mi casa es tu casa? [My house is your house?]: Transnational Practices and the Integration of Children of Return Migrants in their Ancestral Country", I explore the role of transnationalism in the incorporation of children of return migrants. I develop a theoretical approach that builds on Nee and Sanders' (2001) forms-of-capital model of immigrant incorporation but also takes into account transnational networks,

practices, and identities. The forms-of-capital approach has two crucial advantages. First, it is parsimonious. Thus, I can adapt it to understand children—Itzighson and Giorguli-Saucedo's (2005) model includes labor-related variables, something that is not appropriate to understand the experiences of children. Second, it focuses on families—a proper focus for the children's life stage.

To highlight the diversity in incorporation paths, I create ideal types—concepts used as a heuristic tool to understand social phenomena[1]--describing differences related to transnationalism and family resources. As part of this theoretical exercise and to evaluate the validity of my theory, I compare the ideal types with reality (see Swedberg 2018 for a detailed description of the method). To make this contrast, I use data from 49 semi-structured interviews that I conducted with Mexican-American children, their parents, extended family members, and school staff in Zacatecas, Mexico, during the summer of 2017.

In broad terms, I find that prior transnational activities, identities, and social networks play a crucial role in the incorporation of children. I also find that these transnational elements are defined by the financial resources, human-cultural capital, and social capital of children's families. Besides its theoretical relevance, this study is crucial to understand the experiences of Mexican-American children in Mexico and design interventions to help children and their families successfully incorporate in their new home.

Besides kin and friends, community-level transnational networks play a crucial role in the lives of immigrants. Research shows that when migration is ubiquitous in a community, migration becomes socially acceptable, and elements like information and resources that help

[1] Ideal types were first invented by Max Weber. However, as Richard Swedberg (2018) suggests, they are rarely used by social scientists today due to the complexity of Weberian thought and because Weber's definition of ideal type changed as his intellectual journey became more sociological. In this dissertation I follow Swedberg's interpretation of Weber's work.

individuals cross the border become institutionalized (Garip and Asad 2016). In other words, when the incidence of migration becomes high enough, migration networks outgrow personal connections.

Migrants from places with a high migration density often create "satellite" communities in the country of destination. On top of their influence on the social, economic, and cultural life of the community of origin (Rouse 1991; Smith 2006), these satellites play a crucial role in the incorporation of migrants in the country of destination. For example, immigrant organizations and networks connected to communities in the country of origin provide identity, information, and social support to immigrants in the country of destination (Smith 2006).

Research shows that social networks in the community of origin help return migrants reincorporate by providing them with information, housing, and job opportunities (Carling and Erdal 2014; de Haas and Fokkema 2011; Oeppen 2013). Of course, this help is contingent on the existence and strength of the connections. Migrants who sustained communications or engaged in transnational activities like sending remittances or participating in the community can cash in support, while those who were abroad for a long time and neglected their connections or who carry the stigma of deportation find little help from their acquaintances (Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo 2006; Espinosa-Marquez and Gonzalez-Ramirez 2016; Hagan and Wassink 2016; Massey et al. 2006; Sana 2005). Additionally, research shows that in communities with a steady migration tradition and robust community-level transnational networks, returnees find more social support, less stigma, and help to find job opportunities (Wheatley 2011; 2017). However, there is a gap in our understanding of how those community-level connections can help the foreign-born children of return migrants incorporate in their country of ancestry.

In the third and final paper of this dissertation, "Transnational networks in the community and the incorporation of foreign-born children of return migrants in their ancestral land. The case of Mexican-American children in Mexico", I use a mixed-methods approach to

analyze how transnational community networks influence school enrollment among Mexican-American children. For the quantitative part of the study, I analyze data from the 2015 Mexican Intercensal Survey and the 2015 Migration Intensity Index to estimate the relationship between the likelihood of school enrollment and the density of community-level transnational networks. Overall, I find that Mexican-American children who live in places that have stronger connections to the US are more likely to attend school than their counterparts in areas with fewer connections.

For the qualitative part of the study, I use data from 49 semi-structured interviews with Mexican-American children, their families, and school staff in Zacatecas, Mexico. My results suggest three mechanisms explain the positive relationship between the likelihood of school attendance and the density of transnational networks in a community. These mechanisms are normalization, social support, and institutionalization of resources.

In addition to increasing our understanding of the role of community-level transnational networks for the incorporation of children of return migrants, my results have important implications for educational and social policy. Like prior research, I find that Mexican public schools do not meet the needs of Mexican-American children who were not schooled in Spanish and that Mexican-American children battle discrimination and institutional barriers to access education. I show that in areas where Mexican-American children are normalized, discrimination against them decreases, they receive more social support, and school staff is better equipped to help them enroll in schools and address some of their needs—although the good intentions of staff are no match for the dramatic lack of resources that public schools face.

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CHAPTER 1

WHEN THINGS GO SOUTH: ECONOMIC SHOCKS AND CHANGES IN THE COMPOSITION OF RETURN MIGRATION[2].

Introduction

Recent work on the connection between specific socioeconomic contexts and migration shows that the composition of migration flows changes according to particular conditions in the country of origin (Garip 2016). To date, there is a gap in our understanding of how the composition of return migration responds to particular economic and social conditions in the country of destination. As our understanding of migration as a process deepens, more and more scholars are turning their attention to return migration— which can be understood as a subprocess of migration (Cassarino 2004). Though smaller than migration in magnitude, return migration has significant theoretical implications for scholars of migration, incorporation, and transnationalism. Return migration challenges scholars of migration to think about the migration process as an intricate movement that involves more than a one-way trip between countries of origin and countries of destination (Davies, Borland, Blake and West 2011; Yueya 2014). It challenges scholars of incorporation by highlighting the fact that not every migrant will join—by desire or inertia—the ranks of the mainstream society. Return migration also concerns

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scholars of transnationalism, as cross-national movements have profound implications for social and economic conditions and social networks in the country of origin and the country of destination. Besides, from a policy perspective return migration has significant labor market consequences, it affects the supply and demand for services, and it has a demographic effect on the composition of the population of the country of origin and the country of destination. Just like in the case of migration, the selection of people who return is not random. Although there is evidence that individuals with particular profiles—older, less healthy, with shorter length of residence in the country of destination, etc. -- are more likely to return than others, we have a limited understanding of how specific contexts in the country of destination affect the composition of return migration.

There is a consensus that economic conditions are an essential element of migration. From a theoretical perspective, economic theories of migration state that economic conditions, labor market conditions, income maximization, are fundamental drivers of migration (e.g., Garip 2016; Massey, Durand and Malone 2002; Massey and Garcia Espana 1987; Ranis and Fei 1961). Concerning economic criteria, in very general terms people migrate to maximize their utilities— the neoclassical model of migration (Borjas 1989, 1991; Todaro and Maruzko 1987)—or to achieve a financial goal abroad and then return home— the new economics of labor migration theory (Stark 1991). These assume that the economy in the country of destination is in such a condition that it is rational for individuals to migrate to a country with better terms— and, implicitly, stay there at least until they reach their economic goal. However, if migrants are rational agents, dramatic downturns in the economic situation in the country of destination will play a part in their decision to stay or to go back home. If the economy in the place of destination is not going well, migrants would at the very least question their permanence (Bastia 2011)—although this reconsideration would consider the social and economic

conditions in the country of origin, as well as other aspects of migrants' lives in the country of destination such. This presents an interesting puzzle, as it involves a second selection process—the first one being selection into migration.

Previous work from the North American—US—and European contexts points to an ongoing debate on the impact of economic downturns on the magnitude of return migration (Bastia, 2011; Beets and Willekens 2009). Some claim economic crisis are associated with an increase in the number of people who go back to their home country (Camarota and Jensenius, 2009; Zaiceva and Zimmermann 2016), others argue that they decrease return migration flows (Rendall, Brownell and Kups 2011), and others claim they do not have an effect at all (Passel and Cohn 2009). In this respect, though scholars have centered their efforts on analyzing the magnitude of return migration under economic crisis, there seems to be an implicit recognition that the probability of return during these is not equal for all migrants. The existing literature highlights that economic downturns hurt economic sectors like construction and manufacturing, which have a large concentration of low-skilled immigrant employees (Beets and Willekens 2009; OECD, 2009).

Also, the first motivation for migration may affect the likelihood of return. In the wake of economic downturns, labor migrants may be more likely to return than family reunification or political migrants (Beets and Willeken, 2009). In this respect, some have argued that while many considerations explain migration, the explanatory power of economic incentives is considerable (Borjas 1989). However, despite the evidence that changes in economic conditions can alter the composition of migration flows (Garip 2016), the question on the impact of economic crisis in the country of destination is still unexplored.

In this study, I analyze the composition of Mexican return migration flows in the context of the 2008 economic crisis to understand the connection between the profile of return migrants

and economic shocks. The Mexican-US migration is unique due to the geographic and historical ties between Mexico and the US, the number of people involved, and the duration of the migration flows. Mexico and the US share a 2,000- mile border, and they are set apart by a vast difference in economic development and in living standards of their population—which is why it is not surprising that Mexicans migrate to the US in search of a better life (Durand 2016). The Mexican-US migration has gone through several stages, which are tied to specific socio-economic conditions. Phases of the Mexican-US migration are characterized by distinct migration patterns and differences in the composition of the migration flow (Durand 2016; Garip 2016; Massey, Durand and Malone 2002). For a long time, the Mexico-US migration system worked in "equilibrium."

Mexican migrants came to the US to work for some time and went back to Mexico after they met their economic goal or when they reached retirement age (Massey, Durand and Malone 2002; Roberts, Frank and Lozano Ascencio 1999). Changes in immigration policy and tighter border control disrupted this migration system, leading Mexican migrants to stay in the US for a more extended period (Massey, Durand and Malone 2002; Massey, Durand and Pren 2015, 2016; Massey and Pren 2012). Another salient aspect of Mexican migration is that its composition is tied to specific socio-economic conditions. For example, individuals who left Mexico as part of their household strategy to weather the economic crises of the 1980s and 1990s tended to be younger males from relatively wealthy rural households. Individuals who migrated for family reasons—a population that grew in the post-IRCA period—were more likely to be women and children (Garip 2016).

Previous research shows that return migration in the Mexico-US is shaped by a wide array of individual and macro-level factors, and it has become less predictable since 2010 (Masferrer and Roberts, 2012). The literature on Mexican return migration has explored

individual-level factors such as the life course (Wong, Palloni and Soldo 2007), adverse health selection (Arenas, Goldman, Pebley and Teruel 2015; Ullman, Goldman and Massey 2011), gender differences in return migration (Wong and Gonzalez-Gonzalez, 2012), deportations or fear of deportations (Golash-Boza 2011; Hagan, Rodriguez and Castro 2011; Zayas 2015), and the blurry line between voluntary and involuntary returns (Wheatly 2017). Studies on the connection between macro-level factors in Mexico and changes in return migration have analyzed the salience of the economic conditions in the place of origin of migrants (Lindstrom 1996), the role of changing geographical patterns of Mexican migration to the United States (Masferrer and Roberts 2012; Riosmena and Massey 2012), and insecurity in the border region in Mexico (Paris Pombo 2010). Studies on changes in return migration that look at factors in the US have primarily focused on the effects of tightening border control (Cornelius 2005; Massey 2005), more strict immigration policies (Massey, Durand and Malone 2002; Massey, Durand and Pren 2015; Massey and Pren 2012), and the increasing relevance of deportations in the last decades (Golash-Boza 2011).

Studies show that migrants who stay in the US for lengthier periods, form families and have US-born children, and integrate into the US economy are less likely to move back to Mexico (Massey, Pren and Durand 2016; Van Hook and Zhang 2011). Besides, a salient variable that has shaped return migration in the last decade was the 2008 Recession. This economic downturn had dramatic consequences in the US and the Mexican economies (Villareal 2010). The US GDP contracted about 5.1% between December of 2007 and the second quarter of 2009 (Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Department of Commerce). Between 2008 and 2009, approximately 8.3 million jobs were lost in the US (Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission 2011). The effects of the crisis had a global impact. As a result of the crisis, Mexico's GDP contracted about 6.6% in 2009 (Villareal 2010).

The recession had a profound impact on the lives of Mexican migrants regarding employment, but also because it created conditions that increased discrimination and anti-immigrant policies. Some scholars argued that the severe conditions would increase return migration, while others were cautious about overestimating the effects of the recession—time proved the latter side was correct (Rendall, Brownell and Kups 2011). The debate was partly fueled by the difficulties to measure return migration due to the lack of data (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2015) and to problems defining who counts as a return migrant or a circular migrant (Gandini, Lozano-Ascencio and Gaspar-Olvera 2015).

To analyze return migration, scholars have used data from the US Current Population Survey (CPS), the Survey of Migration at the North Border (EMIF), and the Mexican National Survey of Occupation and Employment (ENOE) to estimate return migration. Using data from the CPS, Camarota, and Jensenius (2009) used a residual estimation approach and found a significant increase in return migration between the summer of 2007 and the first quarter of 2009. Using the same dataset to look at emigration by subtracting new arrivals and deaths from the Mexican-born population in the US, Passel, and Cohn (2009) argue that there was no evidence that more Mexicans were leaving the US between 2008 and 2009.

Using data from the EMIF, Alarcon and his colleagues looked at data from 2003 to 2008 and found no evidence of an increase in the volume of return migration (Alarcón Díaz–Bautista, González–König, Izquierdo, Yrizar and Zenteno 2008); but Fix and his colleagues (2009) used data from 2000 to 2009 and found a decrease in the size of return migration (2009). None of the studies mentioned up to this point mention the demographic composition of return flows. Finally, using data from the ENOE from 2005 to 2009, Rendall, Brownell, and Kups (2011) found a decline in the number return migrants between 2007 and 2009 among males with less than a college education. They found no change in return migration among females.

However, college is a high threshold for Mexico, a country that in 2010 had an average of 8.2 years of schooling among people 15 years old and over, which is an incomplete middle school education (INEGI). As a result, besides gender and college education, we ignore the characteristics of people who returned to Mexico after the Recession, and how they compare to those of return migrants who went back before the crisis.

In this study, I compare the sociodemographic composition of return migration before and after the Recession to understand the connection between the economic crisis and the composition of return migration. I expand on earlier analyses that explored the immediate effects of the Recession on return migration by expanding the period of study to include the immediate years before and after the 2008 crisis. This widened time frame is relevant because migration is a decision that could take time to make, or because individuals need time to gather resources to return. I consider variables such as age, gender, educational attainment— no schooling or elementary education, middle school or less, high school, and more—, marital status, and if she comes from a state with a longstanding migration tradition.

I use data from the ENOE from the period between 2005 and 2012 to compare the composition of return migration to households before and after the crisis. I use cluster analysis to describe the composition of return migration. Due to the nature of the data, I cannot make distinctions between voluntary and involuntary returns—a difference that is often fuzzy (Wheatley 2017). However, other scholars include involuntary returns in their conceptualization of return migration (Roberts, Menjivar and Rodriguez 2017). For reasons discussed ahead, I will also include deportations in my understanding of return migration.

My results suggest a connection between the 2008 Recession and changes in the composition of Mexican return migration to households. Overall, I find six main types of returnees. Four of them are labor migrants. It is essential to highlight that return migration

peaked in 2006-2007 and was already decreasing by the time the recession began. This means that increases in the prevalence of a group do not imply an absolute increase in the number of returnees that match that profile. My results have significant theoretical and policy implications.

Return migration

In broad terms, return migration refers to the movement of migrants from their country of destination to their country of birth after an extended period abroad (King 2000). For some, return migration is a movement over which migrants have agency, which excludes deportations (King 2000). However, other scholars include deportations in their studies of return migration, highlighting the involuntary nature of such returns (Roberts, Menjivar and Rodriguez 2017). Another reason to include deportations is that to define voluntary returns; we would need to be able to clearly distinguish such returns—something which is possible only from a theoretical perspective. Research suggests that, in real-life settings, the distinction between voluntary and involuntary returns is nuanced (Wheatley 2017). For example, when migrants feel they have no choice but to go back home because of an ailing parent.

Another consideration is that, even within legal terms, a “voluntary” return is not a decision that a migrant would have made given the option to remain. For example, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) defines voluntary return as the privilege granted by an immigration judge by which immigrants are allowed to leave the US "voluntarily"—by their means. In this case, immigration services will let migrants stay for a brief time. I include deportees in my definition of returnees for three main reasons. First, the difficulty of separating voluntarily versus involuntary returns in a precise manner. Second, the impossibility of getting information on deportee status. Third, because deportees who remain in Mexico are also returnees, I do not exclude deportees from the definition of return migrants (Roberts, Menjivar and Rodriguez 2017).

Following earlier work, I frame return migration as a subprocess of international migration (Cassarino 2004). This approach is more realistic than just analyzing return as a separate movement because only those who migrated can return. Furthermore, to understand why people are going back home there needs to be an explicit recognition that people who migrate in the first place are not a random sample of the population, and that the conditions under which these people migrated can be connected to their reasons of return. As such, it is essential to briefly consider how theories of international migration deal with return migration and what exactly counts as return migration.

The existing literature depicts several typologies of return migrants based on different criteria. Russel King (2000) describes categorizations based on colonial relations between the country of origin and the county of destination; the developed and developing status of the economy of the country of origin and the country of destination; on the length of their migration, on their intentions to return, and on their degree of incorporation in the country of destination. Jean-Pierre Cassarino offers a typology of return migrants based on their tangible and intangible resources, if they returned voluntarily, and if they were prepared to (Cassarino 2004).

However, none of these categorizations connect the type of migrant to the social and economic conditions in the country of destination. In her study of Mexican migration to the US, Filiz Garip (2016) demonstrates that the social and economic context shapes the composition of migration flows. Furthermore, Garip (2016) shows that the rationale behind migration for each group is connected to a particular theoretical approach to international migration. In light of Garip's (2016) work, it is not unreasonable to explore the connection between the profile of return migrants and sudden economic shocks and how theories of migration can explain their movement.

Return migration under theories of migration: the effects of an economic crisis.

In the wake of the 2008 recession, scholars and policymakers in the US the and European contexts were concerned about what was going to happen to migrants. In this context, some noted that the lack of empirical evidence gave room for speculation (Beets and Willekens 2009). Academics and policymakers pointed out that the crisis had notably harsh effects on economic sectors like construction and manufacturing, where migrants are over-represented (OECD 2009; Martin 2009; Papademetriou et al. 2009). Scholars and policymakers predicted that social networks and economic conditions in the countries of origin would decrease the flows of migrants returning to their countries of origin. These predictions were accurate: even though the financial blows to migrants were hard, migrants did not flee towards their country of origin (Rendall, Brownell and Kups 2011).

Another prediction was that migrants motivated by labor reasons would be more likely to return than those driven by family, political, and other reasons (Beets and Willekens 2009). Data from the Mexican migration to the US show evidence for this prediction, as young, male migrants with low educational attainment levels were more likely to return than other groups (Rendall, Brownell and Kups 2011). However, to date, no research has explored how an economic crisis can affect the composition of return migration comprehensively by looking at shifts in the composition of return migration flows in the wake of an economic crisis.

In his review of return migration under theoretical approaches to international migration, Jean- Pierre Cassarino (2004) summarizes the profile of return migrants according to the leading schools of theories of international migration. Cassarino (2004) explains that under the neoclassical theory, return migrants are those who had a failed migration experience. In contrast, for the new economics of labor theories, return migrants are those who succeeded in their goals—which is why they can return home. Highlighting the difference between

developing and developed economies, Cassarino (2004) states that for structural theories return occurs when structural conditions change in the country of origin—a matter on which returnees have imperfect information. For transnational theories, the return may be temporary— migrants can move between their country of origin and destination—, and it may take place when conditions in the country of origin are better than in the country of destination. Finally, according to cross-border social network theory—which Cassarino's (2004) separates from transnationalism because it does not assume that networks are formed in the country of origin—return is motivated by social networks. Under the social network approach, return is the first stage towards the conclusion of the migration project (Cassarino, 2004). However, the role of economic shocks is absent in Cassarino's consideration of return migration.

Gijs Beets and Frans Willekens (2009) approach the connection between economic crisis and return migration by looking at how theories of international migration explain why migrants stay. Beets and Willekens (2009) organize their discussion by sorting theories into micro, mid, and macro levels according to the factors involved in migrants' decision to migrate. Micro-level theories, which explain migration as an individuals or households level decision, do not have a straightforward prediction of the connection between the economic crisis in the country of destination and return migration. Beets and Willekens (2009) argue that unemployment and dire conditions can lead migrants to return; migrants may stay if the conditions at home are worse than in their country of migration.

Another factor that deters migration social ties, which support and root migrants to their country of destination. Beets and Willekens (2009) emphasize that according to meso-level theories, the social capital in networks determines whether migrants return or stay. Economic conditions may not lead to a return among those who have robust connections with their community and those who have made a substantial investment in incorporating into the host

society. Finally, macro-level theories are those that look at migration systems like the Mexican-US and the Euro-Mediterranean systems. Beets and Willekens (2009) conjectured that, if the economic crisis did not affect the host and origin economies in an equal manner, transnational connections would foster economic activities among migrant communities—which would minimize the negative economic impact on migrants. However, this discussion does not contemplate the relationship between theoretical approaches to return migration according to the profile of return migrants.

Economic theories of international migration and changes in the composition of return migration.

One of the main goals of economic theories of international migration is to understand the factors that shape the magnitude and composition of migrant flows. In broad terms, economic theories of international migration assume that people migrate because it benefits them in terms of income or psychic satisfaction. Individuals are limited by their economic and social conditions, as well as by immigration policies in the country of destination (Borjas 1989). There are two large groups of economic theories of y international migration: neoclassical theories and the new economics of labor theories of migration. By summarizing these theories into their essential postulates, it is possible to understand how an economic shock would influence the composition of return migration.

The neoclassic model of migration argues that individuals migrate when their expected income in the country of destination is higher than their anticipated income in their country and if they obtain psychological satisfaction (Borjas 1989, 1991; Todaro and Maruzko 1987). However, all these economic approaches assumed that migration as the outcome, disregarding the fact that not all migrants resettle permanently (Dustmann and Gorlach 2016). By making international migration a process that can include return migration, then migrants in the country

of destination also have to decide to return or to stay. The neoclassical model of migration would predict that those who face a higher cost of staying versus returning home would be more likely to go back to their country of origin. For example, unemployed men who have lower prospects of employment, who also face prohibitive costs of staying due to immigration policy—for example, undocumented migrants—, and those who are less integrated into the country of destination would be more likely to return during a crisis than during other points in time.

On the other hand, it is possible that those who face the direst economic conditions cannot afford to go back, and that unemployed individuals with no savings, who are vulnerable due to their legal status, are trapped in the countries of destination. In addition, the neoclassical theory states that migrants will consider their expected income and mental benefits in their home country. Thus, migrants will consider how, given the globalized nature of the economy, the economic shock that is affecting their country of destination is affecting their homeland. In this respect, migrants will stay if they believe that their situation at home will be worse. For example, unemployed low-skilled migrants who are sure they have lower returns to their skills in their country of birth.

Grosso modo, the new economics of labor theories frame migration as a decision made at the household or family level to minimize the risk associated with income uncertainty and relative deprivation (Stark 1991). This approach states that families seek to obtain income—remittances— and resources to invest (Taylor 1999). Under the new economics of labor migration theories, an economic shock would impact the composition of migration by changing the risk and income of migrants and their families back home. For example, if a person is no longer able to send resources, and she does not expect to be able to do so in a reasonable time, then return is a rational strategy. Thus, migrants that are working in the most affected sectors of

the economy are more likely to return if their families are still in their country of origin. Another possibility is that migrants who were able to send resources before the crisis reconsider their original economic goal given the unfavorable economic environment in the country of destination. As a result, migrants who work in sectors of the economy affected by the crisis can return if conditions at home are better and if their labor can yield more benefits to the household if they are back home. However, if their country of origin is also suffering from a negative economic shock, then changes in the composition of migration are uncertain. There are several reasons for this uncertainty. First, given that migrants are part of a household that has a risk-minimizing/income-maximizing strategy, migrants are not the sole decision-makers. Families may decide that diversifying the geographical location of its members minimizes risks in the long term. Second, families have better information about the economic context in the migrant's place of origin. As a result, households could decide that return does not benefit the family.

Besides, an increase in returns among labor migrants can lead to other types of returns. For example, families of labor migrants who are facing extreme deprivation may choose to send some of their members to their country of origin, where their networks can provide support—and, most likely, where their available resources will last longer.

The effects of the 2008 crisis on Mexican immigrants in the US.

The 2008 crisis had profound consequences on the lives of Mexican immigrants and their families in the US. On economic matters, the recession lowered employment rates among Mexican immigrants and increased poverty levels of Mexican families. In addition, the crisis catalyzed racist sentiments in the US. The increase in racist attitudes and other demographic factors like the rapid demographic growth of the Latino population set in motion anti-immigrant policies at the local level.

The 2008 Recession that hit the US economy started in December 2007 and ended on June 2009 (NBER), but its harsh effects on the labor market remained as late as 2010. Data show that the US economy lost 3.6 million jobs in 2008. By the end of 2009, over 4.7 more jobs disappeared. Underemployment also became a pressing issue: it increased from 8.8% in December of 2007 to 14.2% in October 2009 (Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission 2011). The crisis had a disproportionate effect on Hispanic immigrant workers: by October 2009, the unemployment rate among Mexican and Central Americans stood at 11.5%, two points higher than among the native-born (MPI 2009). In this respect, Mexican-born construction workers faced a difficult time, as their economic sector suffered a sharp blow leading to a loss of 19.8% in employment during the crisis (Goodman and Mance 2011; Kochhar 2008).

Some of the other sectors that suffered dramatically were agriculture and manufacturing, which also have a large proportion of Hispanic and undocumented workers (Goodman and Mance 2011; Passel and Cohn 2015)[3]. This means that undocumented immigrant workers—whose legal status had already affected their earnings (Hall, Greenman and Farkas 2010)—were in a particularly difficult economic situation. With the decrease in employment, Mexican immigrants—particularly undocumented individuals—saw their means of life directly threatened. In this respect, data suggests that the 2008 recession led to an increase in poverty among Mexican immigrants and their families. Poverty rates among Mexican children of immigrants went from 29.8% in 2007 to 37.3% in 2010 (Lopez and Velasco 2011).

[3] The industries with the largest shares of undocumented workers are: professional, business and other services (22%), leisure and hospitality (18%), construction (16%), manufacturing (13%), and agriculture, forestry and mining (5%). As a share of the total workforce, the industries that employ a larger proportion of undocumented immigrants are agriculture (16%), construction (12%) and leisure and hospitality (9%) (Passel and Cohn, 2015).

Stress caused by discrimination and an increase in negative sentiments against Mexicans added to the burden of economic hardship. During the Recession, anti-immigrant sentiments increased among low-skilled workers who were most affected by the financial crash (Goldstein and Peters 2014). There is consistent evidence that Hispanic immigrants face negative attitudes from the native-born population, and that the situation is more dramatic for undocumented immigrants. Paired with the anxiety of the economic context, the discrimination that Mexican immigrants faced took a toll on individual and family well-being (Ayon and Becerra 2013; Finch, Kolody and Vega 2010; Gee, Ryan, Laflamme and Holt 2006). This means that Mexican immigrants were not only in a vulnerable economic situation but that the impact of social tensions was an critical stressor.

Another consequence of the economic crisis was an increase in anti-immigrant policies at the state and national levels (Golash-Boza 2011; Golash-Boza and Hondagneu-Sotelo 2013; Ybarra, Sanchez and Sanchez 2015), though other factors like a rapid increase in the immigrant population are an important explanation of said policies (Steil and Vasi 2014; Walker and Leitner 2011). The evidence suggests that the events like 9/11 and the 2008 economic recession shifted the enforcement of immigration policy towards interior enforcement and a racial and gendered system of deportations (Golash-Boza and Hondagneu-Sotelo 2013). Policies like the 287(g) and measures that sought to push immigrants out of the US by making their lives difficult were an essential part of the story (Parrado, 2012). The hostility of these anti-immigrant policies did not go unnoticed by Mexican immigrants and their families, who felt them as discriminatory (Salas, Ayon and Gurrola 2013; Zayas 2015).

However, the evidence shows that despite the obstacles they faced in the US, Mexicans did not return to Mexico in multitudes., though there is reason to believe that economic considerations became a critical element in the decision of those who did (Parrado and Flippen

2016; Rendall, Brownell and Kups 2011; Villareal 2014). Scholars have observed the same complexity in the decision to return during an economic crisis in the Latin American and Spanish context (Bastia 2012; Boccagni and Lagomarsino 2011). The literature of return migration in the Mexican-US context points to some reasons why the vast majority of Mexicans stayed in the US. This literature also leads us to think about how different conditions could create different sets of incentives for people according to their age, health, socioeconomic status, legal status, and their family life.

Return migration in the Mexico-US context.

It is a well-known fact that US immigration policies shape migration and return migration. A detailed account of the history and nature of the Mexican-US migration is beyond the scope of this research, but to understand return migration, I will revisit some of its main aspects. The Mexican-US migration has gone through several stages, marked by demographic, social, and economic conditions in Mexico and the US; and immigration policy in the US (Cornelius 1981; Durand 2016; Garip 2016; Massey, Durand and Malone 2002). The factors that mold these stages also shape return migration. Historically, Mexican men came to the US in search of economic opportunities during temporary stays. Ironically, before the US implemented and enforced strict immigration policies, Mexican migration to the US had followed a circular pattern. This means that for many migrants, going back was part of their migration process. This circular pattern was disturbed by immigration policy. The immigration policies of the US government did little to deter undocumented immigrants, but it did stop them from returning home, and it encouraged a new type of migration (Durand 2016; Garip 2016; Massey, Durand and Malone 2002; Massey, Pren and Durand 2016).

For a considerable part of the 200th century, Mexican migration to the US was motivated by economic reasons. Starting with the Bracero Program (1942-1964)—a policy that

brought seasonal laborers to the US—, documented and undocumented Mexicans came to the US in search of temporary employment. Migration became so established that it continued after the Bracero Program ended, though the largest share of the post-Bracero migrants came undocumented. Just like braceros, Mexican laborers during the Undocumented Era of Migration (1965-1986) worked in the US for a period, and then they returned to their families in Mexico. The passing of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) marked the beginning of a new immigration era characterized by contradictions.

On the one hand, it granted amnesty and a path to citizenship to undocumented immigrants that had been living in the US since 1982. On the other hand, IRCA implemented tighter border control and sanctions for employers that hired undocumented immigrants (Christi, Meissner and Bergeron 2011; Durand 2016). In 1993, border control operations made crossing more difficult. In 1996, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRAIRA) imposed tighter immigration controls and sanctions for undocumented crossings, and it introduced more strict employment verification guidelines (Legal Information Institute). After 9/11, immigration became a national security issue, and the government created the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to increase border control—partly as a response to a social panic towards Latino immigrants (Massey, Pren and Durand 2016).

Contrary to what the US government anticipated, strict border control did not stop the flow of undocumented immigrants. Instead, it transformed the male-dominated circular migration flow to a more permanent settlement with a larger composition of families (Massey, Pren and Durand 2016). Overall, border enforcement created a new era of return migration. These controls had a caging effect on undocumented immigrants, though they increased mobility among immigrants with papers (Massey, Durand and Pren 2015; Massey, Pren and Durand 2016). Data points to a trend towards an increase in the length of residence among

undocumented migrants in the US that started in 2000. As of 2014, about 66% of undocumented immigrants were long term residents in the US—which means they have been in the country for over ten years (Krogstad, Passel and D'Vera Cohn 2017). Immigrants with a lengthier residence are less likely to return because they incorporate in the US, and they develop stronger ties in the country. Some undocumented migrants brought their families to the US, and others started their families and have US-born children (Taylor, Lopez, Passel and Motel 2011). These stronger bonds decrease immigrants' incentives to go back to their place of origin. However, to date, there is a gap in our understanding of how the Recession affected the profile of immigrants given the preexisting transformation of Mexican migration into a long-term family matter.

Research suggests that between 1995 and 2010, the profile of the average return migrant changed. The average share of males increased from 62% to approximately 69% in that period. The data also show an increase in return migrants who were heads of the household (from 39% to 43%), and an increase in the average age of returnees (from 29 to 31 years) (Masferrer and Roberts 2012). Besides, there is evidence that between 1990 and 2010, return migration changed from positively to negatively selected in terms of counterfactual wages (Campos-Vazquez and Lara 2012). In other words, there have been changes in the profile of return migrants—though no study has analyzed this change in the context of the economic recession.

Research on Mexican return migration focuses on four major factors: economic and savings goals, health issues, life cycle, and family reasons. The first one concerns monetary matters, and it refers to migrants who return to Mexico after saving enough money to buy a house or start a business in their place of origin (Cuecuecha and Rendon 2012; Lindstrom 1996). The second broad area concerns health issues. The data shows that returnees are more likely to report poorer health than non-returnees. The literature suggests that adverse health selection has become a more salient issue because Mexico has more accessible health insurance (Arenas,

Goldman, Pebley and Teruel 2015; Ullman, Goldman and Massey 2011). Other studies point to retirement as the reason for return: migrants work in the US until they reach retirement age, then they go back to Mexico because of nostalgia, family networks, or because they have investments for their old age in their place of birth (Aguila and Zissimopoulos 2009; Bernabe Aguilera 2004; Massey, Alarcon, Durand and Gonzalez 1990). Finally, the literature has explored the connection between family connections and return migration. Data suggests that family reunification is the most cited reason for return migration among Mexicans: about 61% of migrants declare it as their reason for return (Gonzalez-Barrera 2015). However, deportees might mention family reasons because of social acceptability biases.

Deportations

Scholars point to forced returns as a salient component of Mexica return migration (Roberts, Menjivar and Rodriguez 2017). The literature on deportation is extensive, and a detailed review of the topic that includes crucial elements such as its impact on families and communities, racism, and the human rights aspects of deportation goes beyond the scope of this study. I will talk about it in terms of flows and their connection to return migration.

After 9/11 and the creation of ICE, there was a surge in interior enforcement, and practices like work and home raids became frequent (Durand 2016; Golash-Boza 2012). As Figure 1 shows, there as an upward trend in deportations between 2006 and 2009, and it remained relatively stable until 2012. Mass deportations began under the Bush administration and continued during the Obama administration (2008-2016). However, the Obama administration focused on the removal of non-citizen criminal aliens (foreign-born individuals without US citizenship). The administration relied on four main programs to target criminal aliens: The Criminal Alien Program (CAP), Secure Communities, 287(g) and the National Fugitive Operations Program (NFOP). One of the consequences of the implementation of this

deportation strategy that uses local law enforcement agencies is a racialized and gendered removal process that targets working men Latinos (Golash-Boza and Hondagneu-Sotelo 2013).

Figure 1. Deportations by fiscal year (Mexican v. all citizenships). ICE data are taken from the Transactions, Records, Access, Clearinghouse (TRAC) project from Syracuse University website.

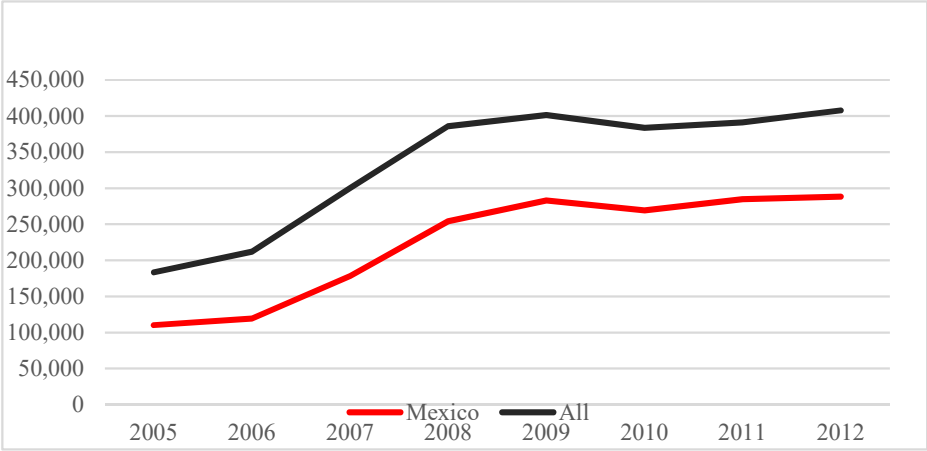
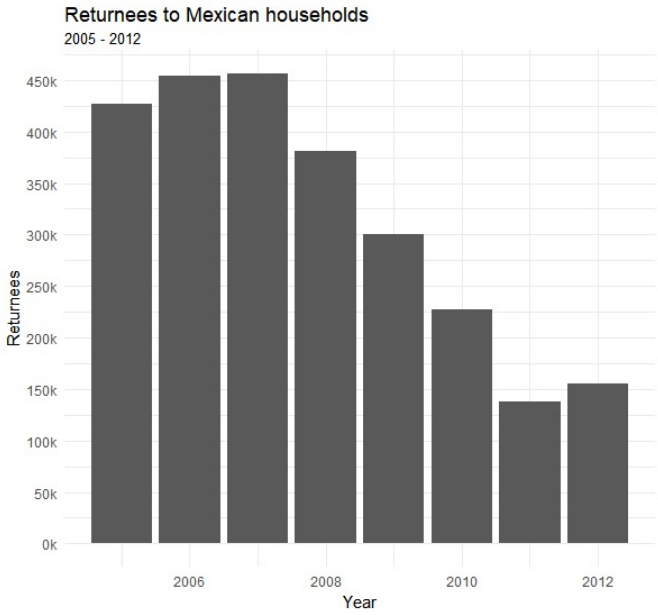


Figure 2. Returnees to Mexican households. Data from the 2005-2012 ENOE panel datasets using INEGI methodology to estimate return migration. Estimates are my own.



One of the most critical connections between deportations and return migration is whether deportees attempt to return to the US, or if they stay in Mexico. Research suggests that more stringent immigration measures are connected to a decrease in the share of migrants that

declare their intentions to return to the US has decreased in the last decade (Amuedo-Dorantes, Puttitanun and Martinez-Donate 2013). The evidence suggests that in 2005, about 5% of repatriated adults declared they would remain in Mexico. By 2015 that number increased to 47% (Schultheis and Ruiz Soto 2017). This means that for demographic and policy matters, deportees are increasingly permanent returnees.

Data

For this study, I use data from the Mexican National Survey of Occupation and Employment (*Encuesta Nacional de Ocupacion y Empleo*, ENOE) for the period between 2005 and 2012. The ENOE is a nationally representative household survey designed to collect information on employment and occupation collected by the Mexican National Institute of Statistics and Geography (*Instituto Nacional de Geografia y Estadistica*, INEGI), which is the government office in charge of collecting survey data, including economic and population census. The data is collected at a quarterly frequency using a rotating panel design that employs five panels in each collection, which means that each household is visited five consecutive times.

The design of the ENOE means that each pair of consecutive panels shares about 80% of their sample, with the remaining 20% corresponding to entering or leaving panels. In broad terms, the sampling design of the ENOE considers state, city or rural region, and the size of the population in the locality where households are located. Each observation has an expansion factor, which is the inverse of the probability of selection in the sample. The expansion factor represents the number of cases that each observation represents as part of the total population. The factor is adjusted to population projections based on the 2010 Mexican Census (INEGI,2007, 2008). Although the ENOE is not designed to measure return migration, it provides accurate data of return migration to Mexican households (BBVA Research and

CONAPO 2016; Rendall, Brownell and Kups 2011). However, estimates using the ENOE data vary due to assumptions on population growth and the moment of return. I will discuss this in detail when I explain INEGI's methodology to measure return migration[4].

INEGI's methodology to build the dataset to analyze return migration.

To estimate return migration, I follow the methodology outlined by the INEGI. The documentation describing the complete methodology is not available online, and I obtained it through an institutional request[5]. The first step is to determine who qualifies as a return migrant from the larger dataset described above. The INEGI defines return migrants as individuals who join the household from living abroad. Due to the design of the ENOE, a person can join a household only during panels 2 to 5 because the questionnaire asks about new members who joined the household who do not appear in panel 1. The second step is to recalibrate the expansion factor to adjust for changes in the overall sample caused by the rotating panel design that can affect the representativity of a sampling unit. This recalibration is done considering the

[4] To compare return migrants to the rest of the population I had to adjust the expansion factors of non-returnees to avoid counting each observation several times, as most individuals appear in the panel assembled data about five times. To do this I assembled the ENOE dataset using the panel design of the survey, which requires assembling the dataset by waves. I assembled each wave by appending the five surveys in which each panel appears (See Appendix for an outline of structure of the waves). Then I averaged the weight of each observation for each of the five surveys in which it appears. Then I divided the average weight by five. This last step allows me to use the entire dataset without counting observations several times. I only use the information of non-returnees when estimating descriptive statistics comparing returnees with the overall population.

[5] Some details were not clearly explained in the official INEGI documentation, and the INEGI sent me internal documents used by their personnel to understand the methodology. The research team that designed the methodology no longer works at the INEGI, but they are still in the Mexican government and I was able to contact one of them, Sara Mera, who kindly answered all my questions about the design, survey, and methodologies. I also contacted Juan Jose Li, the Senior Economist from the BBVA Research group that studies return migration using the ENOE. He explained in detail how he estimated return. My estimates vary from the ones in their reports because they use a geometric population growth approach to estimate intersurvey population. Juan Trejo, the Subdirector of the Survey Design Office of the INEGI also helped me understand the design of the ENOE, and how to adjust the sampling weights to use the full sample.

state, the size of the locality, and the city (this same variable also accounts for whether the sampling represents urban or rural complementary locations). According to the official documentation, to readjust the expansion factor one needs to use the following formula:

$$Calibrated\ Factor = \frac{Total\ Population_{(City,location\ size,state)}}{Population\ common\ sample_{(City,location\ size,state)}} \times Expansion\ factor$$

Where the total population is estimated by adding the totality of expansion factors of all observations in each unit regardless of whether they are part of the common sample. The population in the common sample are those individuals in each quarterly survey that were part of the sample in the previous quarter. Thus, the total population in the common sample is estimating by adding the expansion factors of individuals who are part of panels two to five. The expansion factor is simply the expansion factor given to each observation in the survey. The calibration of expansion factors is done separately for each quarter.

Finally, I adjust the population to an intersurvey point in time because the INEGI assumes that return migrants arrive in the mid-point between two surveys. To adjust the population to an intersurvey value, I assumed a simple arithmetic growth rate. The last step is to adjust the calibrated factor to its intersurvey value by using cross-multiplication.

Due to my research question, I drop all individuals who were not born in Mexico. I only kept observations with completed interviews, as the INEGI does not consider that incomplete surveys are valid. To avoid duplicate observations, that can be a product of error or individuals that left the household briefly, I generated a variable to detect cases in which an individual was recorded twice as a return migrant during the time the household was part of the sample. For example, someone who entered the household in panel two left for panel three and came back in panels four or five. I kept all the observations that were not repeated because I am interested in people who migrated for an extended period (in this case, over a year). Repeated observations could be people who leave the household and return after six months, or they could be errors in

the data. For repeated observations I kept the first value that appeared in chronological order (in my example, that would be the information of the migrant in panel two). These later steps yield a total of 6,977 observations that represent 2,538,439 returnees from the period between 2005 and 2012.

Measures.

My operational measure for return migration is an indicator variable that takes a value of 1 if the individual is a return migrant to a Mexican household. I estimated this variable using the criteria established by the INEGI. Figure 2 shows the number of returnees to Mexican household in the period 2005-2012. Like previous work, I find a decrease in the number of returnees (BBVA Research and CONAPO 2016) after the crisis. Though the size of the flow of return migration is not the central topic of this study, it is vital to keep in mind that my discussion of changes in the composition of return migration takes place in a context of decreasing return migration. This means that when I refer to a percentage increase in return migrants from a determined characteristic or cluster, the number of returnees could have remained constant or even decreased.

To account for gender—a salient factor in migration (Garip 2008; Hagan 1998; Pessar and Mahler 2003)—I include a dichotomous variable that indicates if the individual is a man or a woman. As Figure 3 shows, the largest share of returnees to Mexican households are male. However, after the crisis, there was a slight increase in the proportion of female returnees.

Education is an essential element of migration because it connects self-selection to networks (McKenzie and Rapoport 2010), because it shapes the motivations of individuals to migrate—different groups have distinct motivations (Garip 2016)—, and because it can also affect migrants' incentives to return via to wages (Campos-Vazquez and Lara 2012). I have three categories of educational attainment: none or elementary school education, middle school

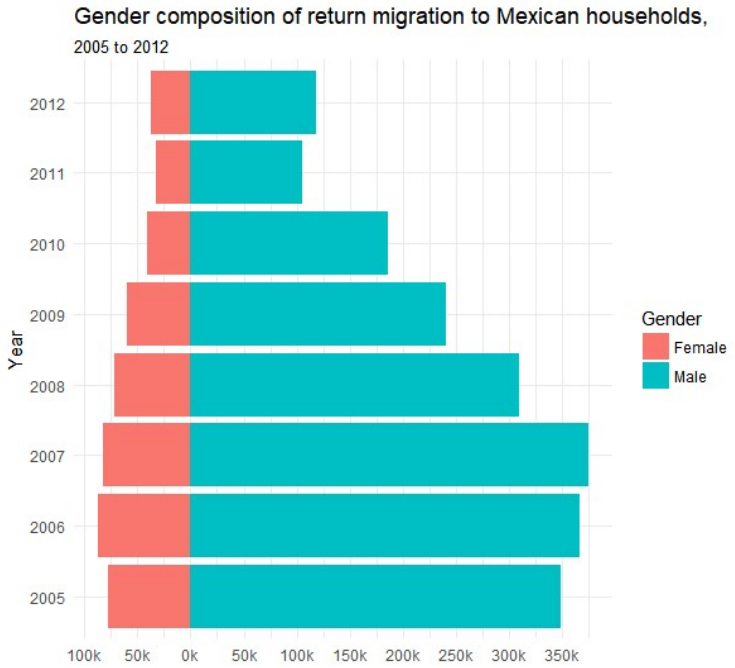
(complete or incomplete), and some high school and beyond. The average educational attainment level in Mexico is middle school education (INEGI), which is why these three categories serve as useful points of reference. As

Table 1 shows, the largest share of return migrants has elementary or less than elementary school education. However, the proportion of returnees with middle school and with high school education or more increased between 2005 and 2009. I consider age because it is a critical component of migration (Hulu and Milewski, 2007; Lindstrom and Giorguli Saucedo 2007), and it shapes events—such as the birth of a child (Parrado, 2011)—that root migrants to their country of destination. I have five age categories: under 15 years of age, 15 to 29, 30 to 45, 45 to 60, and 60 years and more. Consistent with previous work (BBVA Research and CONAPO 2016), my data shows that the highest proportion of returnees are young working-age men and women 15 to 29 and 30 to 44 years old. Generally speaking, the age composition of return migration remained stable throughout the study. However, in the last year studied the proportion of underage and 45 to 60 years old returnees increased. Furthermore, the share of 20 to 44-year-old returnees had two peaks, one in 2007 and the other in 2010.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of operational measures used in the analysis.

Year of return		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Individual characteristics									
	Gender								
	Male	82%	81%	82%	81%	80%	82%	76%	76%
	Female	18%	19%	18%	19%	20%	18%	24%	24%
	Schooling								
	None/elementary	47%	50%	51%	46%	42%	40%	36%	29%
	Middle school	30%	30%	29%	33%	33%	33%	34%	42%
	High school or more	23%	20%	20%	21%	25%	26%	31%	29%
	Age								
	Under 15	4%	7%	4%	5%	6%	5%	5%	9%
	15 to 29	47%	45%	41%	45%	47%	40%	45%	41%
	30 to 44	32%	34%	39%	35%	32%	36%	33%	29%
	45 to 59	10%	10%	13%	11%	11%	14%	12%	16%
	60+	6%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	6%	5%
	Marital status								
	Married or cohabits	30%	32%	29%	33%	33%	34%	35%	35%
	Single	62%	58%	63%	58%	55%	57%	54%	53%
	Relationship to Head of household								
	Head	14%	13%	12%	10%	5%	1%	0%[6]	1%
	Spouse	30%	31%	34%	29%	32%	35%	28%	30%
	Son/Daughter	36%	36%	35%	39%	36%	37%	46%	41%
	Has children								
	Has children in household (head of house hold or spouse)	26%	25%	30%	25%	24%	22%	16%	21%
	Place of birth/residence								
	Born in traditional sending state	43%	47%	45%	42%	44%	46%	41%	43%
	Lives in rural location	36%	42%	42%	45%	38%	38%	34%	43%
Household characteristics									
	Nuclear household	47%	55%	54%	52%	44%	49%	40%	42%
	Household income (per person)								
	Low	51%	50%	46%	48%	42%	49%	36%	42%
	Medium	32%	32%	34%	34%	38%	35%	38%	35%
	High	17%	18%	20%	18%	20%	16%	26%	23%

Figure 3. Gender composition of returnees to Mexican households. Data from the 2005-2012 ENOE panel datasets using INEGI methodology to estimate return migration. Estimates are my own.



Marital status is a critical element of migration because it molds individual and family reasons to migrate. For Mexican men, migration can be motivated to support their family in Mexico, which is the classic migration story. For Mexican women, migration can be connected to reuniting with their husband (Cerruti and Massey 2001). The marital status could also affect the return. For example, the male returnee that goes back home after saving enough money to support his family in Mexico—or the deportee that goes back to his family. The ENOE collects information on marital status for individuals age 12 and older, which means that my variables on marital status only exist for those in that age range. In this study, I include an indicator variable for those that are married or who cohabit, and one for individuals who are single.1 shows an increase in the share of single returnees and a decrease in the proportion of married or cohabiting returnees.

I include three dummy variables to indicate the relationship between the returnee and the head of the household to which she returned. This is important because it is connected to the type of migrant and her reason to migrate during a specific social and economic context (Garip 2016). In this study, I consider if the individual is the

head of the household, the spouse of the head of the household, or the son or daughter of the head of the household. As

Table 1 shows, after 2008 there was a sharp decrease in returnees who were the head of their household in Mexico. The share of returnees who were heads of the household decreased from 14% to 10% in 2008, then to 5% in 2009, and then to 1% or zero in the following years. This is the descriptive variable that has the most substantial connection to the economic crisis. The share of spouses of the head of household remained relatively stable in the period, and the percentage of sons of the head of the household shows a slight increase between 2005 and 2012.

Because family structure and fertility are essential elements of migration, I include a binary variable that takes a value of one if the returnee has children, and a value of zero if she is childless. There is a slight gender difference in the construction of this indicator due to the construction of the ENOE. For men, this variable is only available for heads of the household or for spouses of the head of the household. This is because the ENOE does not ask who the father of each child in the household is, but it does say if the child is the son of the head of the household or her spouse. For women, this variable indicates if the woman has a child regardless if the child is the son or daughter of the head of the household or his spouse (in about 97% of the cases returnee women who have children are also the head of the household or the spouse of the head of the household).

I include an indicator variable to signal if the returnee comes from a state with a robust migration tradition because migration is connected to networks, and networks can deter return migration during times of crisis. The proportion of returnees from states with a strong migration tradition[7] increased during the years with the highest return migration, but then returned to its

[7] Aguascalientes, Colima, Durango, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacan, Nayarit, San Luis Potosi, Zacatecas.

2005 levels (43%). I also include a variable to indicate if the migrant returned to a rural locality (defined by the INEGI as a place with less than 2,500 inhabitants). As Table 1 suggests, the proportion of returnees to rural locations increased from 36% in 2005 to above 40% during the 2006-2008 period, then it decreased again to 38%-34% from 2009 to 2011, and then it showed a sharp increase to 43% in 2012.

With respect to household structure, I consider if the household is nuclear or not. I include a binary variable that takes a value of one if the household is nuclear. As

Table 1 shows, the proportion of returnees to nuclear household increased during the period of higher return migration (2005-2007).

My operational measure of household income categorizes individuals into high, medium, and low-income houses. To avoid validity problems with monetary units and issues caused by differences in household composition I decided to create a variable that indicates the tercile of the distribution of the average income per member of the household. The first step was to calculate the total household income for each household. Then I divided the household income measure by the number of individuals in the household. Next, I estimated terciles using the average income per member of the household. I did this calculation separately for each ENOE quarterly survey. As Table 1 suggests, the largest share of returnees come from households in the lower tercile—from now on, low-income households.

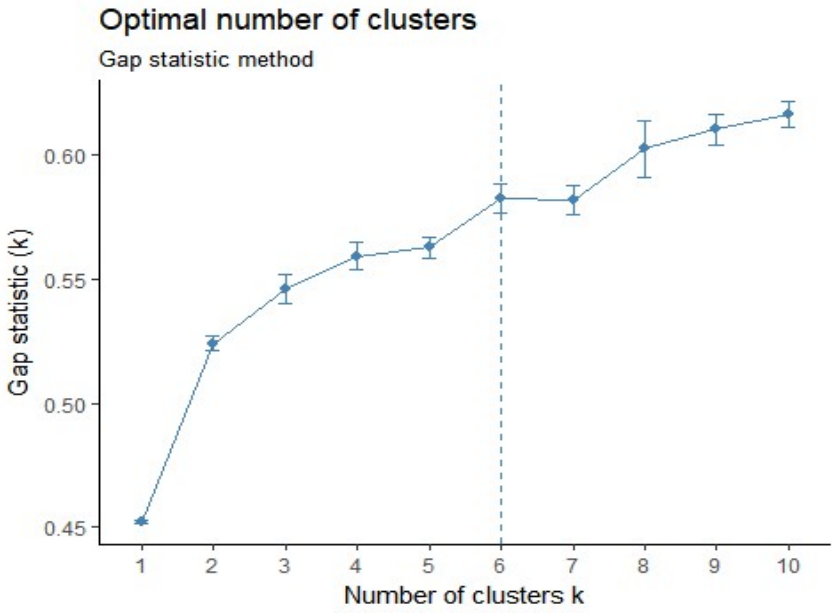
Methods

Like earlier work on the topic (Garip 2016), I use cluster analysis to examine the composition of return migration flows to Mexican households. I use the dataset on return migrants described in the data section of this study. Due to software specifications for cluster analysis, I took an extra step with my data. I used the expansion factor to generate population data, and then I used a random sampling method to create a subsample for the analysis. The

expansion step is necessary because not all observations have equal sampling weight, which means that a random sample of unweighted observations could result in a biased sample that is no longer representative of the population. As is customary with large datasets, I use about 1% of the sample (n= 26,000) to estimate the cluster analysis.

First, based on the literature, I chose the attributes to partition the data. These attributes are described in the measures sections. I code said characteristics in the form of dummy variables to decrease the noise in the data. To estimate my cluster analysis, I use a k-means algorithm. For this analysis, I use the *clara* (Clustering Large Applications) partition method from the cluster package in the R software. To estimate the optimal number of clusters I contrast the results from several different methods. Comparing several results is crucial because there is room for subjectivity in the interpretation of the results of geometric methods such as the elbow approach (Hardy 1994). I used the following approaches: the elbow, silhouette, and gap start (Rasson and Kubushishi 1994) from the *NbClust* package; and the partition around medoids using the Calinski-Harabasz criterion from the *fpc* package. The elbow and gap start methods suggest a six-cluster solution. The silhouette method points to a two-cluster solution. Upon analyzing the results of two solutions—a step I did to verify the pertinence of such a limited number of clusters—I realized that it does not reflect the composition of the flow of return migrants. The Calinski-Harabasz criterion indicates two clusters is an ideal solution, but it does not show a clear second choice. Comparing the results of the methods I decided that the best solution was to use six clusters. Figure 4 shows the results of the gap-statistic method. The rest of the results of the approaches to estimating the best number of clusters are available in the Appendix.

Figure 4. Gap statistic method to determine the number of clusters in the analysis.



To estimate my cluster analysis, I used the Manhattan distance[8], which means that the distances between the data and the center of the cluster equal the sum of the absolute values of the distances between points. Once I had the results of the cluster analysis, I estimated which share of the flow of return migrants is composed by each cluster, and whether these shares vary among three-time points: before the crisis (2005-2007), during the crisis (2008), and after the crisis (2009-2012). By using the years right before and after the crisis I could see whether this event shaped the composition of return migration over some time, and not just during one point. This is an essential matter because migration movements connected to dire economic conditions are not necessarily immediate: people can take time to think about and prepare their return.

[8] To verify the consistency of my results I performed additional analysis using Euclidean and Jaccard distances. The results of the cluster analysis are consistent across measures. I do not include these results in this study.

Changes in the composition of return migration to Mexico: before and after the crisis.

In this section, I describe the overall findings of the cluster analysis, and I provide a brief description of each one of the clusters and their relevance throughout the 2005-2012 period. As I stated before, return migration to Mexico decreased sharply after 2007—most likely due to changes in overall migration to Mexico and immigration policy measures in the US (Villareal 2014; Massey, Pren and Durand 2016). Thus, the changes in the composition of return migration to Mexico took place during a time of decreasing returns.

The data suggests that there are six broad categories of return migrants to Mexican households (See Figure 5), described in Table 2. At least four of those categories seem to be labor migrants: males, with low educational levels, from poor or medium-income households. My results indicate changes in the composition of return migration before and after the crisis driven by changes in the salience of certain groups. In this respect, even though the proportion of some clusters varied in this period, the share of other clusters remained relatively stable or with no clear trend in the variation of their importance. Nonetheless, it is necessary to highlight that return migration peaked before the crisis, and that even though the share of a cluster of migrants (See Figure 6) increase over the period this does not mean that more migrants with that profile returned (Figure 7).

Figure 5. Clusters of return migrants to Mexican households. Data from ENOE 2005-2012, estimations are my own.

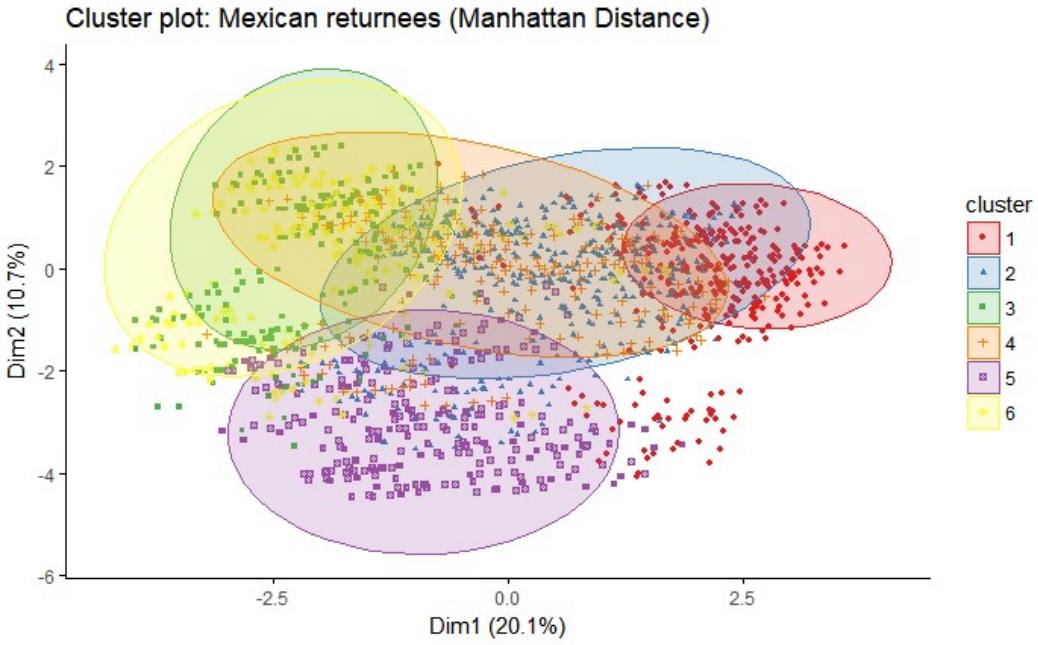


Figure 6. Changes in the composition of return migration: percentage of each cluster of the total return migration flows. Data from ENOE 2005-2012, estimations are my own.

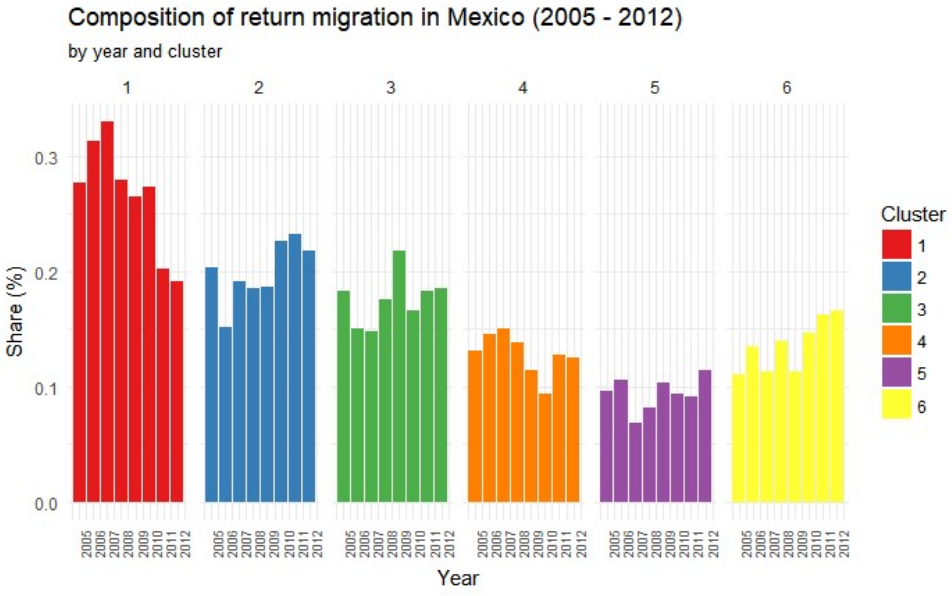
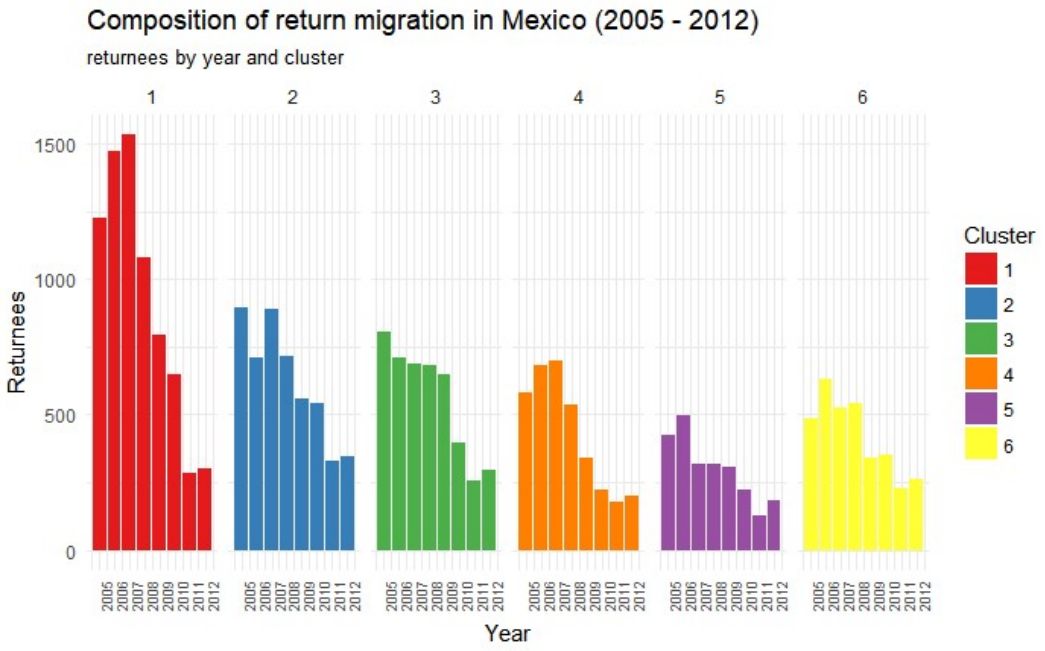


Figure 7. Changes in the number of return migrants per year. Data: subsample of ENOE described in the data section (n=26,000).



Overall, the profiles of return migrants tend to be male. Only one of the clusters of return migrants to Mexican households had females as the most representative gender. This gender imbalance is consistent with the gendered nature of migration and incorporation. Data on Mexican migration shows that at least since 1980, about 40% of Mexican migrants to the US are female (BBVA Research and CONAPO 2013; Fry 2005). In contrast, the share of female returnees is much smaller.

Furthermore, the proportion of female returnees has been decreasing since 2008. Studies on gender and migration suggests that females face a higher cost of return than males, as culture in the US increases their bargaining power within the household and their new position is connected to employment outside the household, less rigid gender stereotypes than the ones they face at home, and gains in economic power (Grzywacz, Rao, Gentry, Marín and Arcury 2009; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1992). Another possibility for the gender imbalance in return migration has to do with life cycle and reproduction among migrant women. It is possible that

Mexican women who migrate to the US have children shortly after their arrival, and that their offspring root them to the US (Parrado, 2011).

An unexpected finding was that none of the clusters represents the profile of retirement migration—male individuals above working age. Initially, I expected to find a group formed by retirement-age return migrants, and I expected an increase in older migrants after the crisis. I had conjectured that older men would face more difficulties to obtain jobs during a recession and that this would end up increasing their likelihood of return.

Cluster 1: The archetypal rural migrant.

Archetypal rural migrants are the largest cluster in the data. The typical returnee in this group is a man in his thirties or early forties, with low educational attainment—at most he has an elementary school education, who comes from a state that has a strong migration tradition. The archetypal migrant is married, and upon his return home to rural Mexico, he is considered the spouse of the head of the household. This change in household position indicates that the migrant was absent for a considerable period, which led to a reconfiguration of the household structure that led to his wife or partner to hold the reins of their home and become the head of the household (Loza Torres, Vizcarra Bordi, Lutz Bachère and Quintanar Guadarrama 2007). Archetypal migrants generally return to their families, which includes their children and their spouse but no other family members. Most archetypal migrants live in low-income households. Thinking about their story, archetypal migrants most likely left their home in rural Mexico of economic reasons. For them, this was how they could provide for their families.

The share of archetypal migrants as a part of the overall Mexican return changed before and after the crisis (Figure 6). They represented the largest share of returnees from 2005 to 2010. The proportion of archetypal migrants peaked in 2007 at about 33%. Their overall relevance in the flow of return migration started to decrease to about 27% from 2008 to 2010. In 2011 and

2012 the proportion of this group diminished to about 20%. Though there is no data on deportations in the ENOE survey, it is not unreasonable to connect the pattern of returnees of this cluster to the increase in deportations between 2005 and 2008.

Cluster 2: Urban laborers.

Urban laborers are similar to archetypal rural migrant returnees concerning age, but they differ to them in terms of education, household type, and urban background. These migrants are not predominately from traditionally sending states in Mexico. These men likely come from less rural areas, which partly explains their higher educational attainment levels (INEE, 2010). Urban laborers are generally married or cohabit, and they do not have children. They return to medium-income non-nuclear family households, and they are not the spouse nor the sons of the head of the household.

Survey data of Mexicans in the US shows that, though agriculture was an important source of employment for migrants in the wake of the crisis, migrants who had middle school education were more likely to work in construction or manufacturing than their less-educated peers (Kochhar 2005). An interesting fact is that the share of urban laborers in return migration increased during the 2010-2012 period, which according to US labor data was the time frame with the least number of employees working in construction in the US (FRED).

The results hint to an increase in the share of urban laborers in the composition of return migrants. However, the trend is not as clear as it is for the only other group that had an increase in this period, which is the accommodated youth.

Table 2. Main characteristics of each cluster or return migrants.

Cluster		1	2	3	4	5	6
Individual characteristics							
	Gender						
	Male	96%	88%	81%	88%	17%	74%
	Female	4%	12%	19%	12%	83%	26%
	Schooling[9]						
	None/elementary	76%	19%	17%	74%	67%	9%
	Middle school	16%	55%	69%	13%	4%	14%
	High school or more	8%	22%	15%	12%	14%[10]	76%
	Age						
	Under 15	0%	3%	3%	0%	43%	2%
	15 to 29	15%	23%	85%	76%	11%	75%
	30 to 44	59%	58%	9%	12%	16%	18%
	45 to 59	20%	13%	2%	7%	15%	5%
	60+	6%	3%	0%	5%	16%	0%
	Marital status						
	Married or cohabits	98%	86%	10%	64%	27%	10%
	Single	1%	4%	86%	31%	18%	84%
	Relationship to Head of household						
	Head	16%	16%	0%	7%	2%	1%
	Spouse	82%	31%	0%	8%	4%	3%
	Son/Daughter	1%	14%	83%	64%	13%	83%
	Has children						
	Has children in household (head of hh or spouse)	68%	23%	0%	3%	1%	3%
	Place of birth/residence						
	Born in traditional sending state	64%	33%	39%	38%	37%	34%
	Lives in rural location	60%	17%	37%	73%	26%	13%
Household characteristics							
	Nuclear household	87%	34%	31%	25%	6%	69%
	Household income (per person)						
	Low	67%	17%	26%	85%	58%	26%
	Medium	23%	62%	65%	8%	26%	9%
	High	10%	21%	9%	7%	17%	65%

[9] These percentages do not add up to 100 because there was no information on educational attainment for some individuals.

Cluster 3: Hopeful sons.

These are single young men, aged 15 to 29 years, with middle school education who returned to a non-nuclear household. They are the sons of the head of the household. Hopeful sons belong to medium-income households, which suggests that they did not migrate out of desperation, but because they were looking for better opportunities for them or their families.

Most hopeful sons do not come from states that have a robust migration tradition, which means they may not have a strong community network in the US—which does not unequivocally mean they do not have family or friends who are migrants. The proportion of hopeful sons in the overall return migration flow was relatively stable between 2005 and 2012, except for a one-year spike in 2009—though their absolute numbers were decreasing (Figure 7).

Cluster 4: Working sons.

Unlike the hopeful sons, working sons are young men who come from low-income households. These young men are 15 to 29 years old, but unlike the hopeful sons, they are married. Like archetypal migrants, they come from low-income households in rural areas. However, they attained middle school education---which is probably a reflection of the overall increase in educational attainment among the Mexican male population 15 years and older, which increased from 6.6 years in 1990 to 8.1 years in 2015 (INEE 2010). These young men from rural settings returned to their parental house. The share of working sons remained relatively stable throughout the years of study, though their numbers decreased sharply after 2008. Though there is no data on the length of residence in the US, the fact that migrants are young, and that they are married but without children can hint to a failed migration. It is possible that these young migrants aspired to a life in the US that would include their spouse, or to obtain

resources to establish their family household in Mexico. Another possibility is that they left Mexico to provide resources for their impoverished families.

Although the data points to the fact that this group of returnees is not highly responsive to the economic crisis, we need to reconsider how economic and migration policy changes affected working sons in the first place. A crucial factor is the high costs of migrating for poor young men in rural Mexico. The high fees charged by migrant smugglers and the elevated risks of crossing make this a highly selective group that is less likely to return because they have more to lose: their background makes it unlikely that they will be able to return to the US if they are undocumented. This is because their families are poor and they are not from areas with traditionally substantial transnational connections. Another critical point is that the numbers of this cluster did show a sharp decrease after the crisis—although this is masked because there was a decrease in all returns.

Cluster 5: Girls in kinship wards

The most representative individual in this cluster is a young girl with elementary school education—explained by her age. Girls in kinship wards live in non-nuclear households, where they are not the daughters of the head of the household. These girls, who probably moved to the US with their parents, were most likely sent back due to adverse social conditions in the US. However, the share of these girls did not increase with the crisis. This could mean that these girls are sent back because their parents find adverse social conditions in the US and possibly because of gender dynamics within migrant households—it is telling that these are girls and not boys. In other words, it is possible that in some households the social context in the US, and the pressure, and the lack of family members are perceived as threatening or "not apt" for young girls.

Cluster 6: Accommodated youth.

This cluster is best represented by a young man with high school education or more, who returns to a nuclear household that is the highest tercile of income. The accommodated young men are mostly single, do not have children, and they return to their parents' house in mostly urban areas. This cluster was the only cluster that showed evident growth after the crisis (Figure 6), though like the rest of the clusters their numbers have decreased (Figure 7). Besides, this was the only cluster that belongs to the highest tercile of household income. It is essential to consider that migrants likely compare the situation in their country of residence to that of their country of origin. If these young men came from better-off families, they probably faced lower risks of returning than other migrant groups.

Discussion

The main finding of this study is that the composition of Mexican return migration to Mexican households changed in the context of the 2008 economic recession that hit the US and Mexico. Return migration peaked before the recession: the highest number of returnees arrived in 2006 and 2007. By 2008 return migration to households started to decrease. The evidence presented in this study suggests that there are six main types of returnees: the archetypal migrant, urban laborers, working sons, hopeful sons, girls in kinship wards, and accommodated youth. The share of some of these groups changed with the crisis, while the share of other groups remained stable. This suggests that not all returnees are driven by economic circumstances. This connection goes beyond the division between labor and non-labor migrants. For example, in the period of study, the share of the typical Mexican migrant (middle-age, low income, with low educational attainment level and from a rural background) decreased, while the share of returnees from more urban backgrounds increased.

These trends are shaped by several factors, including changes in migration to the US, economic conditions in Mexico and the US, social connections in the US, and immigration policy. The fact that the economic crisis altered the composition of returnees points to the fact that the economic crisis did not have an equal impact on every type of migrant and her decision to stay. Furthermore, the fact that returns did not spike shows that the economic situation in the US is not the only variable that influences return---and, possibly, it is not the most salient variable for migrants who have deep connections to the US or who come from poor areas in Mexico.

Some of the limitations of this study come from the data. The ENOE only captures returnees who incorporated to existing households. This means that those who came back to their own households, including entire families, are not included in the sample. Another limitation is that this study does not look at an extended period, but it concentrates on the immediate effect of an economic crisis.

My findings have important theoretical implications. This study supports previous work that states that the composition of migration is connected to particular social, economic and political contexts in the country of origin (Garip 2016)—though my analysis looks at return migration and focuses on the conditions of the country of destination. This finding suggests that there are several mechanisms behind return migration, and that—just like with migration (Garip 2016)—several theories are useful to understand distinct types of returnees. My results also have considerable policy relevance: people who arrive in a country need access to services, and they are likely going to join the labor force—which means that employment and social security are crucial. In addition, returns migration also shapes the demographic composition in the country of destination: if certain conditions affect working-age migrants, then the labor force of the

country of destination will be diminished. This also affects families: migrants are not islands, and many of them have children who were born in the country of destination.

Future research should explore how other factors, such as immigration policy and political events, shape the volume and composition of return migration. Given the political and policy discussions in the US context, this research is urgent. Further research should also explore the impact of return migration on public services and family structure in Mexico and the US.

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Appendix

Table 3. Panel design of the ENOE dataset.

Wave	Panel	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3	Survey 4	Survey 5
1	5	105	205	305	405	106
2	4	105	205	305	405	
3	3	105	205	305		
4	2	105	205			
5	1	105				
6	5	206	306	406	107	207
7	4	106	206	306	406	107
8	3	405	106	206	306	406
9	2	305	405	106	206	306
10	1	205	305	405	106	206
11	5	307	407	108	208	308
12	4	207	307	407	108	208
13	3	107	207	307	407	108
14	2	406	107	207	307	407
15	1	306	406	107	207	307
16	5	408	109	209	309	409
17	4	308	408	109	209	309
18	3	208	308	408	109	209
19	2	108	208	308	408	109
20	1	407	108	208	308	408
21	5	110	210	310	410	111
22	4	409	110	210	310	410
23	3	309	409	110	210	310
24	2	209	309	409	110	210
25	1	109	209	309	409	110
26	5	211	311	411	112	212
27	4	111	211	311	411	112
28	3	410	111	211	311	411
29	2	310	410	111	211	311
30	1	210	310	410	111	211
31	5	312	412	113		
32	4	212	312	412	113	
33	3	112	212	312	412	113

34	2	411	112	212	312	412
35	1	311	411	112	212	312
36	5					
	4					
	3					
	2	113				
	1	412	113			

Table 4 shows that none of the returnees in the 2011 ENOE dataset was the head of the household (code 101).

Table 4 Returnee's relationship to head of the household (ENOE 2011)[11]

Relationship	Code	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Spouse, partner, consort, husband, wife	201	100	26.74	26.74
Concubine	202	1	0.27	27.01
Son/daughter	301	166	44.39	71.39
No kinship	501	3	0.8	72.19
Mother or father	601	17	4.55	76.74
Brother	603	20	5.35	82.09
Grandchild	609	17	4.55	86.63
Uncle, aunt	612	3	0.8	87.43
Niece, nephew	613	9	2.41	89.84
Cousin	614	2	0.53	90.37
Mother or father in law	615	1	0.27	90.64
In-laws	616	1	0.27	90.91
Son or daughter in law	617	26	6.95	97.86
Brother or sister in law	618	8	2.14	100

[11] See documentation of the ENOE. The codes for relationship to head of the household changed during the second quarter of 2012.

Figure 8. Elbow method simulation to determine the optimal number of clusters.

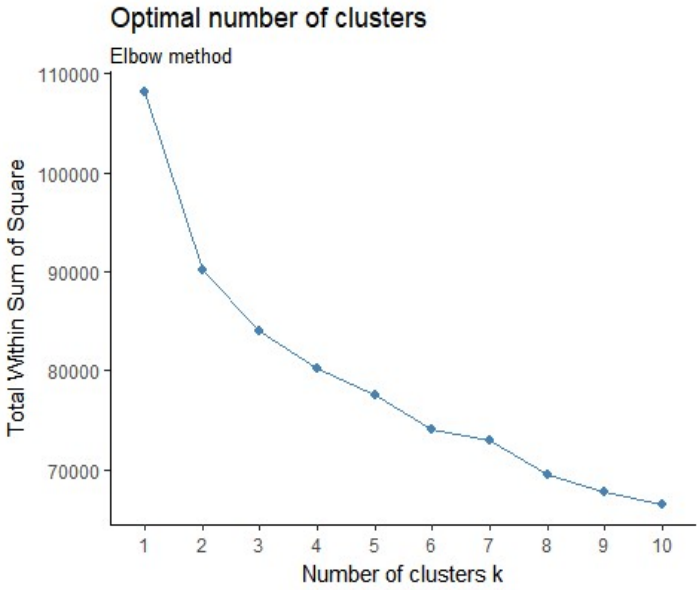
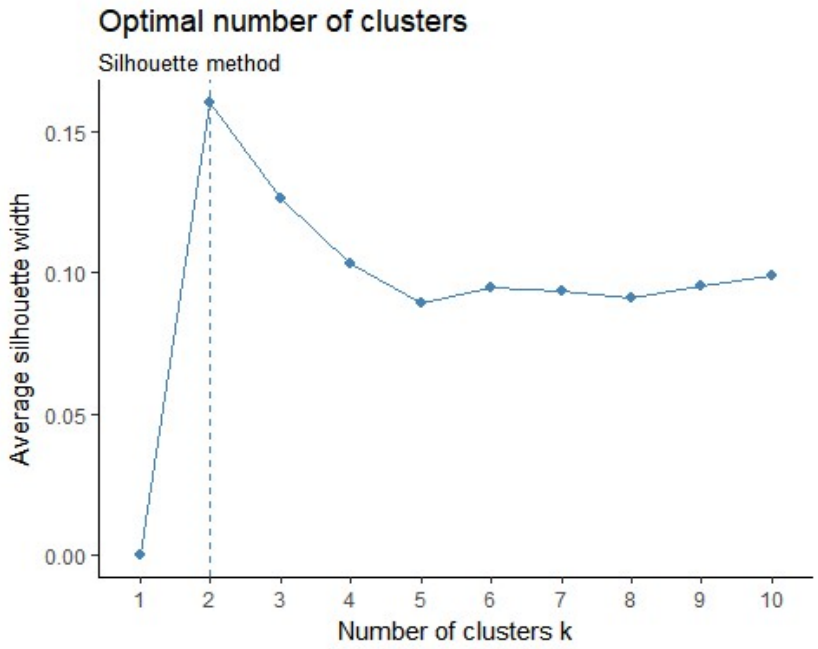


Figure 9. Silhouette method simulation to determine the optimal number of clusters.



CHAPTER 2

MI CASA ES TU CASA? [MY HOUSE IS YOUR HOUSE?]: TRANSNATIONAL PRACTICES AND THE INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN OF RETURN MIGRANTS IN THEIR ANCESTRAL COUNTRY[12].

Introduction

A vast body of research studies how immigrants from developing countries integrate into the country of destination. Recent work views migration as more than a simple one-way movement between the country of origin and the country of destination, showing that some migrants maintain transnational economic, cultural, social, and political connections to their country of birth (e.g., Glick Schiller et al.1995; Hagan 1998; Guarnizo et al. 2003; Smith 2006; Waldinger, 2015). Researchers have studied how these transnational connections increase the likelihood of return and shape the reincorporation process of adult returnees (Carling and Erdal, 2014; de Haas and Fokkema, 2011; Oeppen, 2013). However, research is yet to illuminate how transnational practices and identities affect the incorporation of their foreign-born children.

Prior work shows that ethnicity does not grant foreign-born individuals social membership in their country of ancestry and that the non-migrant native-born often view these immigrants—including children—as foreigners (Tsuda, 2009). Children who relocate to their country of ethnic ancestry—including the second generation—often encounter discrimination,

[12] I am indebted to Filiz Garip, Victor Nee, Richard Swedberg, Shannon Gleeson, and Michiel Paris for their overall support with this project and their valuable comments on previous drafts. I appreciate the advice of Sofia Villenas for taking fieldwork notes and conducting ethnographic research. I want to thank Rodolfo Garcia Zamora for inviting me to do a research stay at the University of Zacatecas, and Rosy del Valle for her guidance during the fieldwork. I also want to thank Gianina Raquel Pesci for her assistance with this research.

legal and socioeconomic barriers to access education due to their citizenship status, and—even when they are somewhat familiar with their ancestral homeland—face cultural shocks (De Bree et al., 2010; Medina and Menjivar, 2015; Roman Gonzalez et al. 2016; Jacobo-Suarez 2017). However, studies to date have not considered how transnational practices and connections shape the integration of the foreign-born children of returnees. This study fills this gap.

The foundational work on immigrant incorporation assumes that once immigrants arrive in the country of destination, they settle permanently. This work assumes that over several generations, immigrants lose their ethnic traits—a consequence of their assimilation into a well-defined and static mainstream society that required them to forgo their connection to their homeland (Gordon, 1964). However, contemporary scholars show that transnational networks, practices and identities—those that span across borders and link migrants to their communities of origin—are simultaneous to incorporation (Alba and Nee 2003; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Itzigsohn and Giourguli Saucedo, 2002, 2005; Nee and Sanders, 2001; Smith 2006; Vertovec, 2004)—albeit its prevalence and salience in the lives of immigrants and their descendants are the subject of debate (Kasinitz et al. 2002; Levitt and Waters 2002; Rumbaut 2002). In this study, I explore how cross-national networks, practices, and identities affect the incorporation of the foreign-born children of return migrants when they move to their ancestral land.

For the children of return migrants, transnational practices before their relocation could have a positive effect on their integration in their country of ancestry because they provide knowledge and skills that help them navigate day to day interactions (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). However, to date, the role of different elements of transnationalism—social networks, practices, and identities—, on the incorporation of the foreign-born children of returnees remain unexplored. I fill this gap in the literature by expanding the forms-of-capital model of immigrant

incorporation—which views incorporation outcomes as a function of the resources in immigrant networks (Nee and Sanders 2001)—to include transnational practices before relocation as a resource for the integration of foreign-born children of returnees.

To understand the applicability of my model, I use an ideal type approach (as described by Swedberg 2018) to describe transnational families and the implications of their transnational ways of being and belonging for the incorporation of their children. To contrast my ideal types with reality, I use qualitative data from 49 semi-structured interviews and informal conversations with Mexican-American children, their parents, kin, and school personnel in urban and rural areas in Zacatecas, Mexico. Here I focus on the experiences of nine Mexican-American children, ages 13 to 17, who moved to Mexico between 2014 and 2017. The ideal type approach and the contrast with qualitative data help me understand the class-based transnational mechanisms behind the incorporation process of children that I describe in my model. Using semi-structured interviews instead of open-ended interviews gives my respondents narrative freedom while maintaining coherence in the data (Weiss 1994).

According to Mexican data, about 785,000 Mexican-American children were living in Mexico as of 2015 (INEGI 2015). To date, our understanding of their lives in Mexico is limited. Family returns and relocations attract considerable media and scholarly attention, but children's lives do not end when they cross the border. As scholars of immigration, we must strive to understand what are the social and structural factors that affect the outcomes of the children of returnees. Given the current political discourse and immigration policies in the US, research on the effects of return migration—including involuntary returns —on US-born children of Mexican origin is timely.

Immigrant incorporation

Through this study, I use the term incorporation, which refers to the process by which the individuals who migrate integrate into their receiving country (Nee and Sanders 2001). I intentionally use this term instead of assimilation, which indicates a multigenerational process by which ethnic lines are blurred, and immigrant groups become a part of the mainstream society in the country of reception (Alba and Nee 2005).

There is a vast body of research that studies how immigrants settle in their country of destination. Among other things, studies have analyzed the role of factors such as social capital and networks (e.g., Hagan 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007), racialization and ethnicity (Jimenez 2008), gender (Itzighson and Silvia Giorguli-Saucedo 2005), laws and institutions (Bean, Brown and Bachmeier 2015), labor market and structural economic conditions (Abramitzky and Boustan 2017; Munshi 2003), schools (Gonzales 2015), and enclaves and geographical location (Logan, Alba and Stults 2003; Nee and Sanders 1987). While some of these studies analyze the interaction of a few factors—like different types of capital (Sanders and Nee 2001) and their interactions with gender (Hagan 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007; Itzighson and Silvia Giorguli-Saucedo 2005)—most of the literature dissects the relevance of a specific element instead of approaching incorporation using a holistic theoretical perspective.

To my knowledge, there have been two primary efforts to theorize incorporation by looking at the interactions between several mechanisms. The first approach comes from Jose Itzighson and Silvia Giorguli-Saucedo's (2005) research on gender differences in immigrant incorporation. Although their work focuses on gender, it is framed using a theoretical model in the form of a structural equation. This model describes the outcome of incorporation as the interaction of seven broad variables—exposure to mainstream society, socioeconomic status, experiences of discrimination, satisfaction with opportunities in the country of destination,

economic and sociocultural transnationalisms, and perceived distance to mainstream society. Besides its contributions to our understanding of the gendered nature of incorporation, Itzighson, and Giorguli-Saucedo's (2005) work highlights the complex nature of incorporation as the interaction of various factors. However, due to its complexity and to the fact that many variables are labor-market specific, this model is not appropriate to understand the incorporation process of immigrant children.

The second approach is the forms-of-capital model developed by Victor Nee and Jimy Sanders (2001), states that the labor market outcomes of immigrants are a function of the social, financial, and human-cultural capital— a term that encompasses human and cultural capital but emphasizes the cultural aspect of the human element—of their families. This model is ideal as a basis to understand the incorporation process of children for two main reasons. The first one is that by using theoretical concepts to name elements that affect incorporation instead of operationalizations of such concepts, it allows us to view incorporation from a more general perspective. This use of concepts is crucial because the labor-specific variables from Itzighson and Giorguli-Saucedo's (2005) work are not applicable to children. The second reason is that it highlights the importance of social networks, something crucial for understanding the outcomes of children—who depend on their families—and to comprehend the overall process of migration and immigrant incorporation. In this study, I expand on the forms-of-capital model of incorporation by including transnational resources to understand the integration of the children of return migrants.

Prior work on the experiences of foreign-born children of return migrants shows they struggle to incorporate, even when children have some skills to navigate their day to day environment (De Bree et al. 2010). In Mexico, Mexican-American children struggle with nativist attitudes and with high expectations of cultural competency (Smith 2006; Zuniga and

Hamann 2009; 2015, Zuniga et al. 2016). Mexican-American children often struggle at schools: their citizenship status can be an obstacle to enrollment, and their lack of Mexican-related knowledge puts them in a vulnerable position (Medina and Menjivar 2015; Roman-Gonzalez et al. 2016). Yet, despite our understanding that Mexican-American children face obstacles to integrate in Mexico and the fact that they belong to one of the largest transnational communities in the world, no study has explored how transnationalism shapes that process.

Transnationalism

While the existence of transnationalism as a phenomenon is generally accepted, there are heated debates regarding its conceptual definition. Although a detailed review of the history and current theoretical debates on transnationalism are beyond the scope of this study, I present a brief discussion of the arguments that are most relevant for this research. Scholars of migration—specifically, anthropologists—began using the term in the early 1990s to describe the relations that immigrants maintained with people in their place of birth (Portes 2001; Vertovec 1999; Waldinger 2015). From early on, there have been essential discussions on what is transnationalism—a process or a set of activities—, what activities or networks can be labeled as transnational, and whether or not cross-border activities are relevant in the lives of immigrants and their children (ex. Guarnizo, Portes and Haller 2003; Guarnizo, Portes and Landolt 1999; Kasinitz et al. 2002; Levitt and Waters 2002; Rumbaut 2002). In this review, I include the two leading positions that touch upon the abovementioned discussions.

The first position on transnationalism limits the definition to a narrow set of activities and excludes day to day interactions. Alejandro Portes, Luis Guarnizo, and Patricia Landolt define transnationalism as those "occupations and activities that require regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders" (1999, 219). Furthermore, in his typology of transnational activities, Portes (2001) constrains his focus to be political, economic, and

sociocultural activities. In addition, his typology of transnational activities explicitly limits transnational actors to grassroots movements and immigrant organizations—including commercial enterprises.

The narrow definition of transnationalism embraced by Portes and his colleagues, though elegant and theoretically robust, is problematic for two reasons. First, it limits transnationalism to a small set of activities that only more privileged immigrants can take part in (see Guarnizo, Portes and Haller 2003) and it ignores the evidence that, while participation in any one type of transnational activity is low, if we look at involvement across different types then engagement in transnational activities is high (Itzighson and Giorguli-Saucedo 2002). Second, it excludes cross-national activities such as phone calls or seasonal visits, which strengthen transnational social networks and have profound effects on the lives of immigrants and their families (Orellana 2001; Smith 2006).

In contrast with the narrow activity-based definition discussed above, Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller (2004) define transnationalism as a process by which immigrants build social fields—interlocking networks of social relations— that connect their country of origin and their country of destination. As part of their definition, Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) emphasize the need to differentiate between the transnational networks in which migrants are embedded—social fields—, their transnational activities—ways of being—, and their transnational identities—ways of belonging. A transnational social field is the array of interwoven networks of social relationships that connect migrants to their place of origin. People in these fields are under the influence of multiple groups of institutions, social organizations, social norms, and laws. Besides, individuals in social fields are exposed to different ideas, practices, and resources. Ways of being refers to the actions of individuals within the social

field and ways of belonging are the concrete and conscious practices by which individuals signal that they belong to a group (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004).

I adopt Levitt and Schiller's (2004) approach to understanding transnationalism due to three main reasons. The first one is that by conceptualizing individuals within social fields, I can understand the impact of transnationalism beyond private social networks and include social institutions (Glick Schiller, Basch and Stanton Salazar 1992). The second reason is that it acknowledges the value of everyday practices that build and reinforce transnational networks. An example is family phone calls (Orellana 2001; Smith 2006). Finally, by making a distinction between activities and identities, we can explore what people do and how they identify as separate elements. I argue that this distinction is crucial to understand the incorporation of foreign-born children of return migrants in their ancestral country.

Mexican-American children in a transnational space

Mexican-American children belong to one of the largest and most salient transnational communities in the world. Due to the constant inflow of immigrants, the Mexican community in the US maintains its cultural identity and strong ties to Mexico (Jimenez 2010). As of 2015, about one-third of the 35.76 million people of Mexican origin in the US were born in Mexico (Flores, 2017). Though the largest share of Mexican immigrants has low income and low educational attainment levels, to understand how Mexican-American children incorporate in Mexico, it is crucial to acknowledge the diversity in the Mexican population.

According to data from 2016, about 10.2 million Mexican-born individuals 25 years old and over lived in the US. About 37% of them have less than a 9th-grade education; 19% between 9th and 12th-grade; 25% have a high school education; 13% have some college education or a two-year degree; 5% have a college degree, and about 2% an advanced degree. When it comes to yearly earnings among Mexican-born individuals who are over 16 years old, about 39%

made less than $20,000; 48% earned between $20,000 and $49,000; approximately 13% made over $50,000 (Radford and Budiman 2016).

Although the composition of Mexican migration is diverse, the most significant share of Mexican migrants comes from poor rural areas, which has a profound effect on the socioeconomic conditions and cultural practices of the Mexican population in the US (Bean et al. 2015; Durand 2016; Garip 2017; Massey 2009; Telles and Ortiz 2008; Waldinger and Feliciano 2004). Besides its concentration in some states like California and Texas, the Mexican population in the US is concentrated in racially segregated disadvantaged neighborhoods, which shapes the cultural and social practices to which Mexican-American children are exposed (Hall and Stringfield 2014; Massey and Rugh 2014; Stanton-Salazar 2001; Whitehurst et al. 2017). The consequence of this concentration is that low-class norms and practices from disadvantaged areas in Mexico define the transnational space in which most Mexican-American children exist—something that affects their interactions with middle-class institutions like schools in Mexico and the US.

Immigrant and citizenship status are two crucial elements of immigrant incorporation. In the US, Mexican-American children's family stability, overall well-being, and access to opportunities are deeply affected by the legal status of the members of their family (Bean et al. 2015; Hall et al. 2010; Telles and Ortiz, 2008). In Mexico, Mexican-American children can suffer due to their legal status. According to Mexican nationality laws, Mexican-American children are entitled to Mexican citizenship—and some may argue they are citizens even if they did not ask for their citizenship. However, Mexican-American children who do not have documents to prove citizenship face obstacles in accessing services like education. This exclusion generates feelings of alienation among Mexican-American children and their families (Medina and Menjivar 2015; Jacobo-Suarez 2017). However, besides the connection between

legal status, access to services, and alienation, we have limited understanding of how living in a transnational social field shapes the incorporation of Mexican-American children in Mexico.

Mexican-American children, ways of being and ways of belonging

Mexican-American children often engage in activities that connect them to their country of ancestry. At home and in their community in the US, Mexican-American children are in contact with Mexican social norms, ethnic food, Mexican music and TV shows, and the use of Spanish (e.g., Jimenez 2010; Smith 2006; Stanton-Salazar 2001; Tran 2011; Whitehurst et al. 2017). When these children participate in Mexican-related activities, they strengthen their connection to their community in the US and Mexico (Mayer 2003; Orellana et al. 2001; Zavella 2011). Mexican-American children can also be transnational by traveling or moving to Mexico for some time—about one in ten Mexican-American children spend some of their childhood in Mexico (Rendall and Torr 2008; Smith 2006). However, to date, we have limited understanding of how the transnational activities that these children take part in while in the US shape their incorporation in Mexico.

As for ways of belonging, the social class of the children's family defines the content, meaning, and incentives to perform the label "Mexican" (Dowling 2014; Jimenez 2010; Lopez and Stanton-Salazar 2001; Telzer et al. 2016; Tovar and Feliciano 2009; Vasquez 2010, 2011; Viruell-Fuentes 2006). Mexican-American children from disadvantaged backgrounds are in contact with popular and low-brow Mexican cultural practices, which molds their possibilities to be and belong in their transnational community. For example, disadvantaged Mexican-American children may listen to *ranchera* music, speak and dress like *rancheros* because that gives them a shared sense of identity—a strategy that helps them cope with discrimination in the US (Petron, 2008; Sidury Christiansen 2015; Viruell-Fuentes 2006). Paradoxically, displaying their belonging in the Mexican transnational community can increase their

experiences of discrimination. In contrast, middle-class Mexican-American children—who tend to live in less racially segregated communities—may not feel compelled to "act Mexican" (Vasquez 2011).

It is important to note that in spite of the profound transnational tries, Mexican culture in the US is often a reinterpretation of Mexico's culture based on the needs and resources of the Mexican population in the US (Campell 2005; de la Torre and Gutierrez Zuñiga, 2013). Therefore, Mexican-American children's understanding and performance of "*Mexicannes*" in the transnational context is not identical to that of the native-born population in Mexico. Another obstacle for Mexican-American children is the Anti-American element of Mexican nationalism (Stephen, 2005)—a feeling that laid dormant in the wake of NAFTA but has been awakened by the current political discourse in the US (Vice and Chwe 2017). Thus, Mexican-American children may feel, identify, and act their understanding of the Mexican label, but the native-born population in Mexico rejects them as foreigners.

Return migration and Mexican-American children in Mexico

There is consistent evidence that US immigration policies and the 2008 Economic Recession altered migration patterns between Mexico and the US. After the crisis, the net rate of Mexican migration to the US became negative and more working-age returnees and their families—including US-born children—went back to Mexico (Gandini et al. 2015; Gonzalez Barrera 2015). As Figure 10 and Figure 11 show, male and female returnees to Mexican households are mostly between 18 and 45 years old. Most migrants cite family reasons as the drive for their return (Figure 12).

Figure 10. Return migrants to Mexican households (2005 - 2015).Source: 2005-2005 panel data constructed using the National Occupation and Employment (ENOE). Taken from the Yearbook of Migration and Remittances Mexico 2016 (p. 88). The 2015 figure is an estimate.

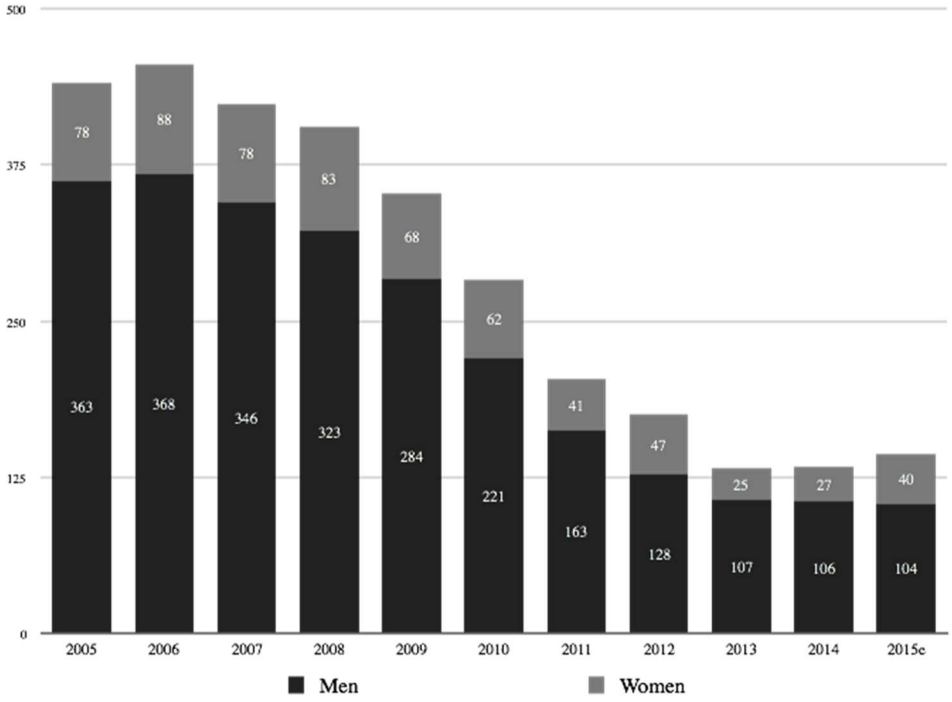


Figure 11. Age distribution of return migrants 2009 – 2014. Source: National Survey of Demographic Dynamics 2014 (Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica, ENADID). Taken from the Yearbook of Migration and Remittances Mexico 2016 (p. 82).

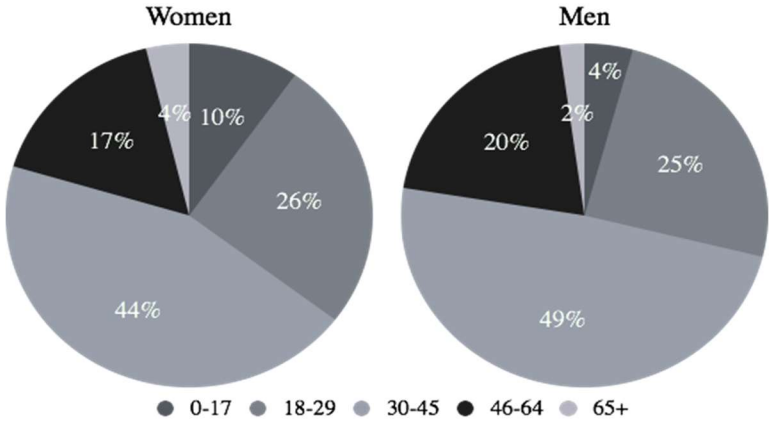
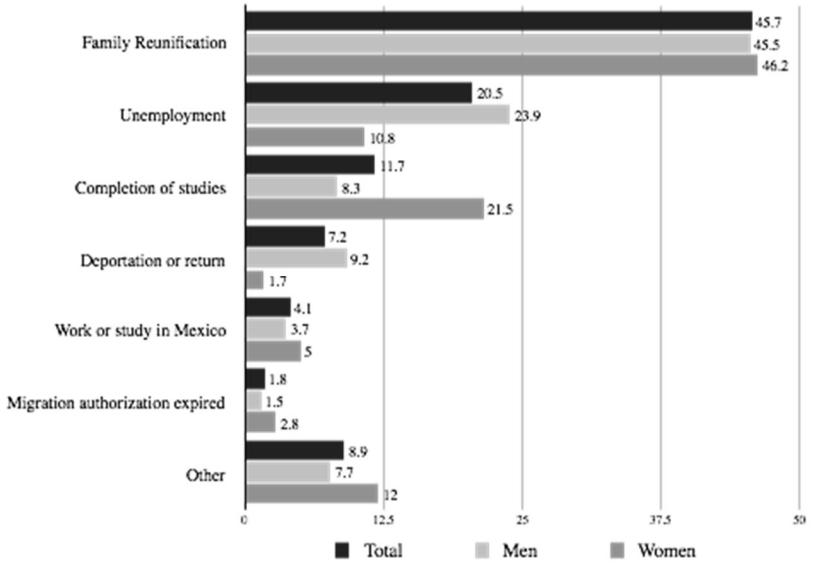
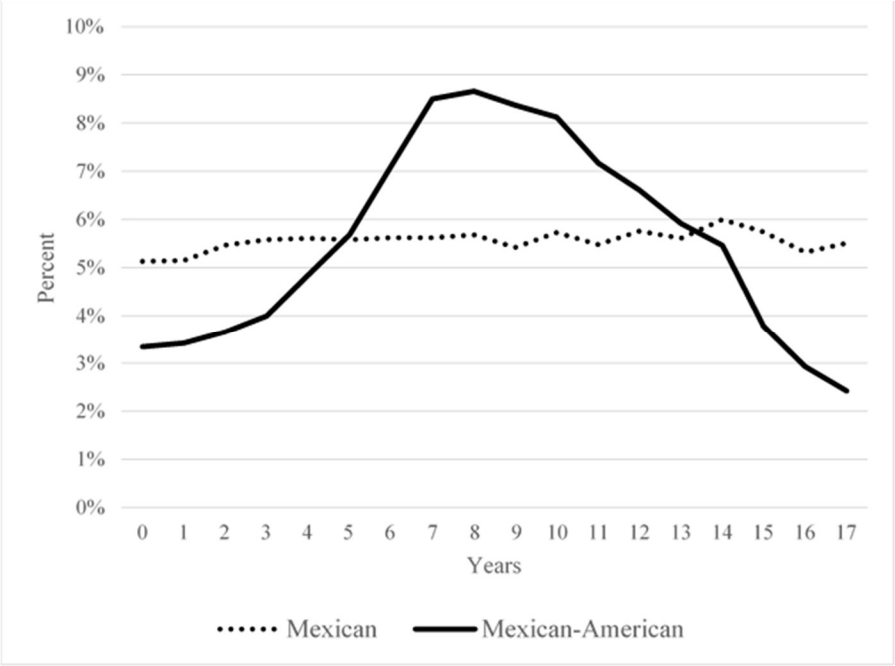


Figure 12. Reasons for return from the US 2009 2014. Source: INEGI. National Survey of Demographic Dynamics 2014 (Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica, ENADID) (INEGI, 2015, p. 11)



Data from the US Current Population Survey suggests that the Mexican-American children population in the US—defined as those children with at least one Mexican-born parent—went from 6.99 million in 2011 to 6.71 million in 2014 (Child Trends 2014, p.15). It is not unreasonable to speculate that a non-trivial part of these children ended in Mexico. Data from the 2015 Mexican Intercensal Survey (INEGI) shows that in that year nearly 784,300 Mexican-American children aged 0 to 17 years old lived in Mexico. As Figure 13 shows, the most significant share of the Mexican-American child population in Mexico is between 6 and 12 years old. The data also shows a sharp decrease among children 12 and over—possibly because children finish elementary school at that age, and they are sent to the US to continue their studies. One explanation for this bias is that some Mexican-American children spend part of their childhood in Mexico and then return to the US (Rendall and Torr 2008).

Figure 13. Age distribution of Mexican and Mexican-American children in Mexico. Source: 2015 Intercensal Survey (INEGI). Estimates my own.



Data and Methods

Data for this study comes from 49 semi-structured interviews conducted in six rural and urban communities in Zacatecas, Mexico[13]. I collected the data during the Summer of 2017, with support from the University of Zacatecas (UAZ). Zacatecas is a state in Central-North Mexico that has a longstanding history of migration and deep transnational ties (Garcia Zamora and del Valle Martinez 2017). This study is centered on the lives of 9 Mexican-American children aged 13 to 17 who had moved to Mexico in the three years before the date of the

[13] The rural communities are close to the cities of Zacatecas and Fresnillo, but they are small enough that their names would make my subjects identifiable. The urban communities are Guadalupe and Fresnillo.

interview. I also interviewed at least one parent per child, members of her extended family, administrative staff, and teachers at her school. I use pseudonyms, and I change the names of the communities for privacy and confidentiality concerns. The names of the communities are not revealed because some of these villages are so small that it would be possible to identify the respondents. My sample, described in Table 5, is not representative, as no dataset registers information of the length of residency of Mexican-American children in Mexico.

My initial sampling design used data from the Binational Program of Migrant Education (*Programa Binacional de Educación Migrante)* (PROBEM), which is a government program that aids migrant children enroll in Mexican and American schools. However, after visiting over a dozen schools in several communities, we found out that just one in more than 40 children registered in the program in Fresnillo—the municipality with the largest share of registered children in Zacatecas—had returned within the last three years. At that point, I decided to visit schools in areas known for consistent return migration. In each school, I asked the principal if she knew about US-born students who returned after 2014. In addition, my research team used their connections to teachers and school personnel in Zacatecas to find children who met the age and residency requirements of the study. Once we located the children, we reached out to the parents through the school.5 presents the structure of the sample.

My interviewees cited family-related issues as the main reason for their return, although some of these returns were not necessarily voluntary. This information is consistent with other studies and survey data on Mexican return migration, and with studies that ask for a revision of the dichotomy "voluntary" and "involuntary" returns, as in some cases the line is blurry (See Figure 3) (Medina and Menjivar 2015; Wheatley 2017). Only one of the seven families in this study had a nuclear structure; the rest lived in extended households. The average age of the children in the sample is 14.3 years old, and the average length of residence in Mexico is 1.9

years. Most of the families were from a lower-class background. Only two of the nine children in the sample are male.

I conducted most of the interviews with Mexican-American children in Spanish[14], although phrases in English came up from time to time. Only Jose chose to speak in English. All the interviews with parents, school staff, and family members were conducted in Spanish. My position as a middle-class Mexican woman from Mexico City researching return migration in urban and rural areas of Zacatecas situates me in a liminal state in the insider/outsider dimension. On the one hand, my urban middle-class background places me in a position of privilege—particularly towards participants who are in a precarious socioeconomic status. On the other hand, because the research project required subjects to think about Mexico, the US, and Mexicans in the US, my Mexican identity and immigrant experience became salient.

I use combined information from the interviews of children, parents, kin, and school staff to get a broad understanding of how the children integrated and what the mechanisms behind their integration were. My protocol did not allow me to share the responses of children with other respondents and vice versa. Thus, I was able to cross-check the information that respondents gave to me and to compare different accounts of the life of each family. I had no problems with contradictory reports, and the separate interviews yielded complementary details on the process of return, how children felt about Mexico before they came, how children reacted to their migration, how children feel in Mexico now, and how children remember what it took for them to settle in Mexico. I use the data from these interviews to contrast reality with the ideal types described ahead.

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[14] I am a native Spanish speaker.

Table 5. Sample of Mexican-American children and their family members

Child (age, place of birth)	***Years living in Mexico***	***Parent (age, schooling, occupation)****	***Social class***	***Reason for return***	***Family members (age, schooling, occupation)***	***School staff***
*Jennifer (14, Colorado)****	1	Enrique - father (42, 6th grade, agricultural worker) Undocumented. Mother is still in the US. She is undocumented, but she is working to regularize her immigration status.	Middle-lower	Domestic violence.	Estela - paternal grandmother (62, 3rd grade, family owns a small restaurant) Manolo - paternal grandfather (64, 3rd grade, family restaurant). Grisela - aunt (40, 6th, housewife). Diana - cousin (19, 9th grade, helps with household chores)	School vice principal**
Zoe (13, Texas)	3	Armando - father (39, 6th year, construction worker). Undocumented. Mother (Mexican American) is still in the US.	Lower	Fear of crime (Armando) and family reasons (Zoe)	Rosa (aunt, housewife)**	School principal (Ignacio), social worker (Carmela), English teacher (Juan), administrative staff*
Jose (15, Oklahoma)	3	Lourdes - mother (41, 9th grade, store clerk). Undocumented. Father is in the US (34, 6th grade, agriculture) Undocumented.	Lower	Family (Lourdes' father was dying)	Candelaria - maternal grandmother (no schooling, housewife). Carmen - cousin (15, student).	Principal (Ignacio)**, vice principal (Ramiro) , English teacher (Ernesto), prefect (Julián).

Table 5. Sample of Mexican-American children and their family members (Cont.).

Child (age, place of birth)	***Years living in Mexico***	***Parent (age, schooling, occupation)****	***Social class***	***Reason for return***	***Family members (age, schooling, occupation)***	***School staff***
Selena (16, North Carolina) *Alicia (14, North Carolina)*	1	Francisco - father (37, high school, unemployed). Undocumented. Mother (Honduran) is still in the US. Undocumented.	Lower (Middle-lower class in the US, before Francisco was deported)	Deportation (Francisco) and family reunification.	Alejandra - paternal grandmother (60, 6th grade, housewife). Angel - paternal grandfather (57, 9th grade, police officer).	Alicia's middle school: Principal (Rebeca), prefect (Armando), science teacher (Felipe)
Roman (13, Illinois) *Carolina (17, Illinois)*	2	Alba - mother, (39, 6th grade, food stall owner). Undocumented. Joan - father (44, 9th grade, owns a small blacksmith shop). Undocumented.	Middle-lower	Unemployment and family reasons	Sarahi- maternal aunt (48, 6th, food stall owner)	Principal (Laila), English teacher (Gabriela), social worker (Perla)
Manuela (13, California)	2	Karina - mother (40, high school, unemployed). Undocumented. Father is absent. He left the family several years ago, and they never heard from him again.	Lower	Health and family reunification.	Dolores - maternal grandmother (72, no schooling, housewife)	Principal**(German), Vice-principal (Diego).
Mariana (14, Idaho)	2	Miriam- mother (50, college, accountant). US citizen. Father (American)- deceased	Middle	Family (Miriam's father was dying)	Thalía- aunt (55, professional degree, owns a small business)	Principal (Evangelina)

** Parents who were not present in italics. I present the data to give context to the child's nuclear family.*
***Informal conversation*
****Not attending school at the time of interview. She was enrolled in a Mexican school for most of the school year, but went back to the US to finish it.*

Expanding the forms of capital model to understand the effects of transnationalism on incorporation.

My argument is that transnational practices shape the process of integration of the children of returnees (See Figure 14). The implication is that, if we chronologically think about this issue, the integration process begins long before these children move to their new "home." Furthermore, I argue that the network resources that shape immigrant integration according to the forms of the capital model (Nee and Sanders, 2001) are the same as those that shape transnational practices. I expand the process of integration to account for transnational practices, and I analyze all these processes by looking at the resources of the child's family from the forms of capital perspective.

Figure 14. A theoretical framework to understand the role of transnationalism on the integration children of transnational populations in their ancestral home.

	Financial resources	**Social capital**	**Human-cultural capital**
Transnational ways of being	Constraints the potential transnational activities that the family and the children can engage in.	Strength of the networks. Possible activities in which children can engage.	Defines the context and content of transnational interactions. Influences what children know about Mexico. Shapes the type of Spanish spoken in the household.
Transnational ways of belonging	Allows individuals to afford to portray themselves in particular manners.	Contact with displays of "*Mexicanness*." Emotional meaning attached to the performance of identity.	Shapes the practices by which transnational children actively display elements of their transnational identity.
	↓	↓	↓
Integration in ancestral country	Determines the economic conditions of how families to re-settle.	Transmission of resources (human-cultural capital, economic resources), solidarity.	Shapes interactions with formal and informal institutions.

The financial resources, social capital, and human-cultural capital in a child's network shape her transnational ways of being before relocation. As for financial resources, they shape

the context in which children live, which affects their opportunities for transnational ways of being and belonging. As discussed, lower-income Mexican-Americans tend to live in geographically disadvantaged areas with a high concentration of their co-ethnics, which determines the content of the practices and identities they are exposed. Financial resources limit other crucial transnational practices, most notably, travels. Mexican-American children who have the opportunity to spend their holidays in Mexico have a more in-depth knowledge of and connections to their ancestral land—including friends and closer bonds to their kin.

Mexican-American children who had contact with their kin in Mexico had stronger social connections at the time of their arrival, and they were more familiar with Mexico. Furthermore, they were able to draw social support and knowledge-based resources from their network more rapidly, as they already had social connections. Like previous work, I found that Mexican families and their US-born children place considerable value on their *familia*, and that close-knit families maintain strong transnational ties and engage in activities such as phone calls, visits, and that children may be sent to live in Mexico for a short time (Orellana et al. 2001; Rendall and Torr 2008; Smith 2006). I also found evidence that Mexican-American children participate in transnational activities and become familiar with Mexico by spending time with their extended Mexican family in the US (Vasquez 2011).

Nonetheless, social capital and strong transnational families do not unequivocally mean that US-born children have enduring connections to Mexico, nor that the bond served to transmit human-cultural capital nor linguistic resources. Mexican migrants mention love as their motivation to work hard to give their children better opportunities and to send remittances to their parents. Frequently this motivation pushes migrants to work long hours and weekends, sacrificing interactions with their US-born children. This lack of contact prevents the

transmission of cultural capital, and it shows that social capital does not always lead to the transfer of cultural capital (Coleman, 1988).

The human-cultural capital in the child's network determined the content of their interactions and the definition of the label "Mexican." Mexican-American children from low socioeconomic status families tend to be in environments where low-brow Mexican culture and vernacular Spanish were the norms. In these contexts, the notion of "Mexican" draws heavily from low-brow Mexican cultural practices, and it has strong ties to the *cholo* and hip-hop US urban cultures. In other words, Mexican-American children adopt transnational social codes that help them navigate their environment in the US. In Mexico, these interpretations collide with what the native-born deems as "genuine Mexican," creating nativist frictions. Furthermore, the human-cultural tools of the family create two critical areas of disadvantage for children in low socioeconomic status families. First, the vernacular Spanish spoken at home does not match the Spanish required at school. Second, families who lack middle-class human-cultural capital are unable to navigate formal institutions like government bureaucracies that deal with citizenship issues or schools.

Finally, another important element that shapes the transnational ways of being and belonging of Mexican-American children, as well as their incorporation in Mexico is the legal and citizenship status, both in Mexico and the US, of the members of their family. Legal and citizenship status are connected to financial resources and human-cultural capital, which is why I do not treat them separately. However, I discuss their role in ways of being, ways of belonging, and integration.

Using an ideal types approach to understand the connection between family resources, transnationalism, and incorporation.

I use an ideal type approach to understand how family resources affect children's incorporation. As Richard Swedberg (2018) explains, ideal types are concepts used as tools that help us understand the complexities of social reality when describing a new phenomenon. To use ideal types, I need to account for intentionality. Intentionality means that individuals' actions must correspond to their intentions (Swedberg 2018). In the case of transnationalism, people sustain transnational networks and engage in cross-border activities because they want[15] to maintain their connections to their place of origin.

I base my elaboration of ideal types on the resources and transnational engagement of families. The reason is straightforward: children are entirely dependent on their families. Unlike adults who have some independence, children's resources rest solely on their family socioeconomic conditions. Moreover: children have limited agency over their network structure, exposure to activities, family behaviors, and place of residence.

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[15] There can be a myriad reasons for an individual to sustain transnational connections. For example, migrants cherish people in their networks and do not want to sever those connections. People may care also about their identity and think about connections to their homeland as their "roots" (Viruell-Fuentes 2006; Smith 2006). Migrants can also be pragmantic and use their ethnic connetions to gain an advantage in their new homeland (Alba and Nee 2003). A final example of motivation is return migration as a future possibility: migrants may sustain networks and engage in practices like sending money or participating in social and political activities that improve the conditions in their hometown because they are planning to go back (Sana 2005).

Conversely, people may want to cut their connections to their place of origin. For example, they may have fled because of trauma and have no desire to be attached to their past. People may choose to break their ties and to shed their cultural and ethnic identity with the hopes of incorporating more efficiently in their new home. For example, some families may choose to stop speaking their native language and switch entirely to English and stop engaging in cultural traditions if they believe that will help the family become American and prevent rejection from the mainstream society (Vallejo 2012; Wiley 2013).

Before I discuss my ideal types, I want to make three necessary clarifications. First, at this point, when I consider social capital, my main focus is the strength of the ties that the family has to kin and acquaintances who remain in their country of origin. In other words, the strength of their cross-border connections. Second, in my model, I separate between financial resources and human-cultural capital to explain their role in detail. However, they are so interconnected that separating them would be redundant. By combining them into class, the interpretation becomes more intuitive. Third, to make my classifications more realistic, I divided the middle class because into upper, middle, and lower-middle class. This is because intracategory differences in the middle class have a substantial impact on the paths to incorporation of children. I contrast the middle, lower-middle, and lower-class ideal types with the qualitative data I collected in Zacatecas. The information I use to compare my upper class and upper-middle-class types to reality comes from personal knowledge[16].

Figure 15. Ideal types of families by transnational engagement and class

		Social class		
		Low	***Middle***	***Upper***
Transnationalism	***High***	Transnational low class	Transnational middle class	Transnational upper class
	Low	Distant low class	Distant middle class	Distant upper class

[16] My background as a middle-class Mexican woman with a graduate degree from a US university and my private school education growing up in Mexico have given me contact with upper-middle and upper classes. When I theorize about elites and upper-middle-class families, I think about the experiences of acquaintances in New York City; San Antonio, Texas; Washington D.C., and the Bay Area. Some of these individuals have relocated to Mexico with their US-born children because of their employment—they had a better offer in Mexico or their company decided to relocate them. In other cases, the families missed Mexico and decided to go back.

As general note, my qualitative findings coincide with prior research with respect to the intersection of class with transnational activities (Vasquez 2011, Viruell-Fuentes 2006) and the emotional and situational motivations to perform transnational identities (Delgado 2014; Perez-Brena et al. 2015; Rangel-Ortiz 2011; Smith 2006; Umana-Taylor et al. 2014; Vasquez 2011). These coincidences give me confidence in the validity of my ideal types to describe different paths and mechanisms of incorporation. In Table 6, I detail some characteristics, transnational ways of being and belonging, and elements in the return of inclusion of high-transnationalism families—from now on, transnational families. Then, I describe how they contrast with Mexican families in the US, and how their resources and cross-border activities shape the incorporation of Mexican-American children in Mexico. After that, in Table 7, I describe the characteristics and incorporation process of low-transnationalism families—from now on, distant families. Following this description, I contrast these distant types with reality.

High transnationalism families

Transnational upper-class Mexican families

These families are bilingual, binational, and bicultural. Parents have legal immigration status, and they occupy high-ranking positions in multinational corporations. The parents use Spanish at home and imbue their children with a positive connotation of Mexican identity. These children reinforce their linguistic and cultural abilities through their interactions with other transnational Mexican families in their communities of residence and during visits to their family and friends in Mexico. The children have access to books in Spanish and English at home, which enhances their vocabulary as much as their day to day contact with their parents and their frequent visits to and from relatives. These families frequently engage in high-brow cultural practices, like visiting museums and going to exclusive cultural events, in which children learn about elite Mexican culture.

Table 6. Ideal types of transnational families.

Class	**Parental education**	**Parental occupation**	**Household linguistic practices**	**Ways of being**	**Ways of belonging**	**Context of return**	**Incorporation**
Upper	College degree or graduate school	High-status, high-skilled, very high-paying jobs (ex. High positions in transnational corporations, successful large or medium business owners)	Parents are bilingual, but they make a conscious effort to speak their native language at home. Their identity and reasons for being transnational motivate this decision. Children speak a highly educated version of their parental language.	Constant phone and video communication, social media, frequent international travel, regular visits from kin, constant participation in high-brow cultural activities, bilingual household library, participation in traditional celebrations, ethnic food, and storytelling at home.	Ethnic pride attached to positive emotional content. Understanding of the label based on upper-class practices. Children do not feel the need and are not expected to perform their ethnic identity at all times. They may choose when and how to signal their belonging to their ethnic community.	Returns are voluntary and well planned.	The family resettles comfortably. They move to well-off areas in their country of origin. They may move to a house they owned or acquire a new property. The children matriculate in elite educational institutions. Children use their cultural and academic background to their advantage. Children also use their strong personal connections to obtain emotional support and knowledge-based resources to navigate their day to day interactions with formal and informal institutions.
Middle							
Upper-middle	College degree or graduate school	High-status, high-skilled, high paying (ex. Tech workers, college professors in elite universities, high ranking members in international development organizations)	Parents are bilingual, but they make a conscious effort to speak their native language at home. Their identity and reasons for being transnational motivate this decision. Children speak a highly educated version of their parental language.	Constant phone and video communication, social media, international travel at least once a year, some visits from kin, participation in high-brow and community-based cultural activities, bilingual household library, participation in traditional celebrations, ethnic food, and storytelling at home.	Ethnic pride attached to positive emotional content. Understanding of the label based on upper-middle-class and middle-class practices. Children do not feel the need and are not expected to perform their ethnic identity at all times. They may choose when and how to signal their belonging to their ethnic community.	Returns are voluntary and well planned	The family resettles comfortably, but with effort. They move to high-income areas in their country of origin. The children matriculate in elite educational institutions. Children use their cultural and academic background to their advantage. Children also use their strong personal connections to obtain emotional support and knowledge-based resources to navigate their day to day interactions with formal and informal institutions.

Table 6 (Cont.). Ideal types of transnational families.

Class	Parental education	Parental occupation	Household linguistic practices	Ways of being	Ways of belonging	Context of return	Incorporation
Middle	High school or ollege degree	Mid-status, mid-paying occupations that require moderate skills or entrepreneurs (ex. mid-ranking employees in large or medium-size organizations, successful small business owners).	Parents may be fluent in the language of the country of destination, but not necessarily bilingual. Parents make a conscious effort to speak their native language at home. Children speak a standard version of their parental language and may use some vernacular expressions.	Constant phone and video communication, social media, yearly international travel, occasional visits from kin, participation in community-based cultural activities, some bilingual books in the household, participation in traditional celebrations, ethnic food, and storytelling at home.	Ethnic pride attached to positive emotional content. Understanding of the label based primarily on middle-class practices and on some mass media content. Depending on their place of residence and their social network, children may feel compelled to demonstrate their membership in their community of origin.	Returns are mostly voluntary. The family can afford the time to plan the return, but they may not have the money to make a seamless transition.	The family can resettle without significant obstacles, but the process can take an emotional and financial toll on their well-being. The family can relocate to their own home or join an extended family household. Children likely enroll in public schools, but they may attend a non-elite private school. Their linguistic abilities can help them navigate formal institutions, though not as smoothly as more privileged children do. When the children arrive they have a supportive network.
Lower-middle	High school or less	Low-level white-collar employees, service workers with stable employment, or experienced blue-collar employees, small entrepreneurs (ex. Nurses, administrative staff, high-skilled manual workers or managers, owners of small family businesses).	Without being proficient, parents can speak the language of the country of destination. However, they make a conscious effort to speak their native language at home. This effort is the product of language limitations and transnational motivations. Children speak a standard version of their parental language and with frequent vernacular expressions.	Constant phone and video communication if the family in the place of origin has access to phones and internet, infrequent international travel due to financial and immigration status restrictions (although the children may spend a season in the place of origin of their parents as a rite of passage), participation in community festivities, consumption of popular television programs, ethnic food, and storytelling at home.	Ethnic pride attached to positive emotion, but also as a survival and incorporation strategy. Understanding of the label based primarily on class practices, subcultures, and mass media content. Depending on their place of residence and social network, children may feel compelled to demonstrate their ethnic identity Members of their network may demand a permanent performance of identity.	Returns can be voluntary or involuntary. Families may not have the time and resources to plan their return.	The family encounters some financial and logistical barriers to their relocation. The family can relocate to their own home or join an extended family household. Children register in public schools, which may not have academic resources to help them integrate such as a bilingual system or programs for second language learners.Their linguistic abilities can help them navigate informal interactions, but they do not have the cultural capital to thrive in formal institutions, When they arrive they have a supportive network, but they may not be as close to them as more privileged children.

Table 6 (Cont.). Ideal types of transnational families.

Class	**Parental education**	**Parental occupation**	**Household linguistic practices**	**Ways of being**	**Ways of belonging**	**Context of return**	**Incorporation**
Lower	High school or less	Low-status, low-paying occupations (ex. Gardeners, agricultural workers, construction workers).	Parents may have an elementary or intermediate command of the language of the country of destination. Parents decide to use their native language as the family language, to maintain the household identity but also because they have linguistic limitations. Children speak a vernacular variation of their parental language.	Occasional phone and video communications depending on cost and if the family in the place of origin has access to phones and the internet. No international travel due to financial and immigration status restrictions. The children may spend a season in the place of origin of their parents as a rite of passage, or because the family cannot afford childcare in the country of destination. Participation in community festivities, consumption of popular television programs, ethnic food, and storytelling at home.	Ethnic pride attached to positive emotional content, but also as a survival and incorporation strategy. Understanding of the label based primarily on low-class practices, but also inspired by subcultures and mass media content. Depending on their place of residence and their social network, children may feel compelled to demonstrate their membership in their community of origin. Members of their network may demand that the children engage in permanent performance.	Returns can be voluntary or involuntary. Families rarely have the time and resources to plan their return.	The family encounters considerable financial and logistical obstacles to their relocation. The family can relocate to their own home or join an extended family household. Depending on the family's financial situation, their arrival can put a considerable economic strain on their kin. Children register in low-performing public schools, which may not have academic resources to help them integrate. Their linguistic abilities can help them navigate informal interactions, but they do not have the cultural capital to thrive in formal institutions. Furthermore, their ways of being transnational—which are based on subcultures or low-class culture—can lead to discriminatory practices in institutional settings. When they arrive, they have a supportive network, but they may not be as close to them as more privileged children. These children will struggle to incorporate, and their successful integration largely depends on how close they are to their family and friends in their parental land.

These children's performance of Mexican identity replicates the behavior of their parents, relatives, and other wealthy acquaintances. However, while in the US, their high-class status overshadows their ethnic identity. Besides, their class background gives them flexibility in their performance of Mexican ethnicity (Vallejo 2011). For example, these children may participate in traditional American festivities without being signaled by other Mexicans as less Mexican. Conversely, they may celebrate Mexican Independence without being singled out as less American.

These families may decide to go back to Mexico because they miss their country or because they want their children to grow up closer to their extended family. Another possibility is that parents have a job opportunity or that their companies decide to relocate them. Independently of the reason for their return, these families have the time and resources to plan their relocation and resettle as a nuclear family. If they do not already own one, they can buy a house in an affluent area in Mexico.

Since the children always had a strong network in Mexico, their family and friends will welcome and support them. This social support will help them understand minor cultural nuances appropriate for their context—like adopting a more respectful tone to elders than one would in the US. Mexican-American children in this category will attend elite, bicultural private schools[17]. Their institutions have adequate resources to help them, including extra-curricular tutoring. These children's prior exposure to elite Mexican culture and their educated linguistic

[17] Unlike the US, Mexican public schools are not funded by local taxes. This means that wealthy areas do not necessarily have well-funded schools. No public school in Mexico has the resources of well-funded public schools in the US. Partly because of the state of public education, private school enrollment is more common in Mexico than in the US. This includes the middle classes. In the last three decades the emergence of for-profit low-quality private schools that appeal to the middle classes has been one of the most salient phenomena in Mexican education.

practices will help them navigate their academic journey and interactions outside the school. Overall, their process of incorporation will be easy.

Transnational upper-middle-class families

Like their upper-class counterparts, these families are bilingual, binational, and bicultural. Parents are highly educated and employed in high-paying occupations. For example, high-skilled workers in Silicon Valley. These families have high incomes, but they are not as wealthy as the upper-class. They travel internationally, but less frequently than the Mexican upper class.

The parents are bilingual, but they intentionally speak Spanish at home. They make an effort to familiarize their children with their country of ancestry—they take them to visit family, bring them to cultural activities, read to them in Spanish, and tell them stories about their homeland. Parents may have a collection of books in English and Spanish and encourage their children to read and improve their vocabulary. These children engage in high-brow cultural practices, like visiting museums and going to classical music concerts, in which they learn about Mexican culture. In the US, these children live in predominantly white or diverse neighborhoods and attend schools public or private schools. The children feel proud to be Mexican, but they do not feel compelled to "act" Mexican all the time. They have flexibility in how and when to display their ethnicity.

Besides their interactions with their Mexican relatives, these children intermingle with other Mexican families from a similar socioeconomic background. This exposure to other middle-class and upper-middle-class professional Mexicans and cultural activities reinforces these children's sense of Mexican identity; as well as their linguistic and social practices.

Much like the upper-class, these families' returns are driven by nostalgia or job-related reasons. The families have time and resources to plan their departure. They also have the money

and knowledge to select a school that has the resources to help their children succeed. In this case, it means enrolling their children in elite private school education, where they will be surrounded by teachers and classmates who are fluent in English and familiar with US culture. Given their prior transnational experiences, children have the appropriate cultural expertise and linguistic tools to navigate formal and informal situations. The strong support from their network plays to their advantage. As a result of their transnational practices, networks, and socioeconomic conditions, these children experience a trouble-free incorporation.

Transnational middle-class

Middle-class Mexican transnational families have sufficient income to subsist comfortably but without luxury. Parents may have a college degree, professional degree, or a technical diploma. They may have legal immigration status. Some occupations of Mexican parents in these families are managerial positions in the service industry or as successful small-business owners. These parents use Spanish at home and instill a sense of Mexican pride in their children. Children in these families grow in ethnic neighborhoods, but—depending on their location—they can also live in areas with a high density of white population. These children attend average public schools. The composition of the school-population depends on their place of residence, and it strongly affects their incentives to "act" Mexican.

If parents in these families have legal immigration status, the family can travel to Mexico. However, for them visiting Mexico requires considerable sacrifice, and they can only afford it about once a year, during holidays or special occasions. Children can use phone and video calls to maintain contact with their kin and with the friends they make during their visits.

In most cases, these families have some agency in their relocation. Upon arrival, a supportive network embraces these children. The family has enough resources to make ends meet, but may be able to stretch them to improve their children's education. For middle-class

Mexican-American children in Mexico, this can mean private school education—though not in an elite bilingual and bicultural system.

Mariana and Miriam are a great example of a middle-class transnational family. Miriam acquired legal status when she married Mariana's father, a white American citizen who passed away when Mariana was five. Miriam made a conscious effort to make Spanish the dominant language at home. She also got her daughter books in Spanish and took her to museums during their yearly visits to Mexico. Mariana had frequent phone conversations with her grandparents, aunts, cousins, and friends made during her holidays. This network was crucial when she resettled in Mexico. Mariana, who is biracial, lived in a mostly white community in the US. She thought of herself as Mexican-American, but she never felt that her ethnicity was relevant. Miriam wanted Mariana to feel proud of her roots, and she made sure to celebrate the most relevant Mexican festivities at home. There were no large Mexican or Hispanic celebrations in the community, so Mariana had little incentives to "act" Mexican.

Mariana and Miriam moved to Mexico because Miriam's father was dying. Miriam wanted to be close to her mother during such grueling times. The women moved to Miriam's parental home in a middle-class neighborhood—the same house where they spent their holidays for many years. Mariana spoke fluent middle-class Spanish. She enrolled in a private Catholic school, where teachers devoted extra resources to help her thrive. However, the education was not bilingual nor bicultural, and Mariana had to make an additional effort to excel in her academics. Her family is middle-class, and their schooling allowed them to help her with minor academic difficulties such as how to correctly write accents in Spanish.

In her day to day experiences, no one pointed out that she is American—her family and friends do not consider her biracial and cultural identity as something that makes her "less Mexican." The principal in her school echoed this feeling: Mariana was born in the US, but she

is Mexican. After all, she is fluent in Spanish and was always familiar with her town in Zacatecas. Her middle-class background and transnationalism paved the way for her incorporation in Mexico.

Transnational lower-middle-class

Transnational lower-class families manage to make ends meet, but have limited access to non-essential goods or activities. Mexican parents in transnational lower-middle-class families have, at most, high school education. These adults may not have legal status in the US. These families live in predominately low-income Mexican or Latinx neighborhoods. Thus, children grow up observing and normalizing "being Mexican," as well as participating in community celebrations. These children attend average or low performing public schools with a high percentage of Latinx students. The composition of their school increases their incentives to "act" Mexican.

Although Mexican parents in this group usually speak some English—without being bilingual—the family speaks Spanish at home. While linguistic limitations undoubtedly affect the choice of Spanish as the primary household language, parents may also want to reinforce the Mexican identity of the household and to facilitate communication with the extended family. It is essential to keep in mind that the family uses vernacular forms of Spanish, and the children may be able to speak but not read or write in the language.

Due to their legal status and economic conditions, parents may not be able to visit their homeland. However, parents may send the children during the summer holidays for a season—as a rite of ethnic passage and to make sure they "keep their roots." This infrequent physical presence does not mean the children have little contact with their network. Families in this category frequently make phone and video calls and use social media to maintain their connections. These activities, as well as telenovelas and other mass media representations, shape

children's understanding of the label Mexican and mold their performance of identity as a class-based act, likely rooted in subcultures. Selena and Alicia's case shows how children draw from urban subcultures like *cholos* and *rancheros* to inform the presentation of their selves.

Families in this category may be forced to return, but they can "choose" to return to their homeland if they are facing dire economic conditions, scant employment prospects, or because they fear their children are exposed to a nocive environment. In this case, as it happened for Carolina and Roman, their parents have time to plan the return. Families can experience deportation—which makes reincorporation more difficult due to the stigma against deportees. Deportations put families in a difficult financial situation, and relocation under such duress can push families into the lower class. Selena and Alicia experienced this downward social mobility as a result of the deportation and subsequent unemployment and mental health issues their father experienced.

For these children, incorporation is a complicated process. Their kin and friends play a crucial role—much more so than for their wealthier counterparts. Mexican-American children in this group have the cultural and linguistic abilities to navigate informal interactions. However, their vernacular form of Spanish is not appropriate to navigate formal institutions like schools. Their parents cannot afford to send them to private schools, and they enroll in public schools that do not have the resources to help students whose schooling was not in Spanish. Children find their educational experience in Mexico frustrating. Adults in their family can provide emotional and financial support, but often lack the academic background to help them with their school work. However, their cousins and close friends can step up to help these Mexican-American children succeed at school.

Carolina and Roman come from a lower-middle-class transnational family. They grew up in the Chicago area, in a Mexican community. They were surrounded by other Mexican

families from their ranch in Zacatecas—including several aunts, uncles, and US-born cousins. Their father, Joan, has always dressed like a ranchero—jeans, boots, shirt, and hat. Joan and Alba—who have middle and elementary school education—always instilled a sense of ethnic pride. They insisted on speaking Spanish at home, cooking Mexican food, and maintaining oral stories linking the family to their locality of origin. Growing up, Carolina and Roman spoke fluent Spanish with ranchero vocabulary and intonation.

The children visited the family's ranch in Zacatecas a few summers, and they also developed strong bonds to the place and its inhabitants through a parallel setting: the reunions in Chicago where everyone talked about the rancho and people living there. Furthermore, the children lived in an area in which "being Mexican" was the norm. They were utterly baffled during the interview when they had to think about how Mexicans speak and talk—"like normal people."

Carolina and Roman's story highlights how the lower-middle-class navigates their return. During the last months, the family was in the US, Joan was unemployed and feared his children would be victims of gangs. He believed his family would be safer in Mexico, and that his relatives would support Carolina and Roman's. Joan and Alba's kin provided emotional support and helped them start their small businesses. The family was not experiencing a dire economic situation, which helped in the process of incorporation of the children.

Carolina incorporated quickly—she was used to Mexican culture, and she identified as Mexican. She made a lot of friends at school. These friends helped her understand some crucial social nuances and Mexican-related educational materials. No one in the family or her circle of friends ever mentions that she was born in the US. In contrast, Roman was not readily accepted by other children, who bully him at school because he identifies as American and not as Mexican.

The story of Selena and Alicia demonstrates how involuntary returns can push lower-middle-class transnational families into the lower class. Their father, Francisco, is Mexican and has a high-school degree. Their mother, who also has a high school education, is Honduran. Francisco and the girls' mother were undocumented. The girls were always closer to their father than to their mother, who they described as an abusive alcoholic. The girls were very attached to their paternal grandparents who, like Francisco, placed a high emotional value on their Mexican identity. Their connection was so substantial that the girls always identified as Mexican—they claim to feel no ties to Honduras. Both Francisco and his wife spoke Spanish at home, and he made sure his children participated in Mexican festivities.

In the US, the family made ends meet. They even managed to save enough to send the girls to visit Mexico once. Francisco's parents had a US visa. Francisco and his siblings—also undocumented migrants—saved enough money to bring their parents for seasonal visits. During these visits, the girls heard many stories about Mexico. Their ideas of what it meant to be Mexican came from their father, their extended family, TV, and their friends at school. The girls dressed and spoke like *cholas* because they were part of the Latinx crew at their school.

Francisco was deported after a domestic violence incident[18]. His deportation triggered a series of events that pushed the family into the lower class. After immigration authorities arrested Francisco, the girls' mother asked their grandparents to take them. She said she did not want to take care of them. With colossal sacrifice, the elderly couple traveled to the US to get their grandchildren. At the time of the interview, it had been one year since Francisco's deportation. He was battling with depression and could not find a stable job. The family

[18] Alicia and Selena's mother called the police and said Francisco was beating her. Both girls told me, separately, that their mother lied to the police. The girls cried desperately remembering how no one listened to them.

subsisted on Angel's salary as a police officer. They barely make ends meet: the family can afford food, but not leisure activities.

The girls found that, in spite of their self-identification, native-born Mexicans rejected them because they were born in the US. The girls were happy and safe in their grandparents' home, surrounded by those they love the most. They also felt welcome in their neighborhood. Sadly, the girls suffered bullying and discrimination at school due to their citizenship status. Their story suggests that children can be in a liminal state of incorporation, holding membership in some circles of their life and facing nativity-based rejection in others.

Transnational lower-class

Transnational lower-class Mexican-American families live under challenging conditions. The vast majority of parents in this group are undocumented immigrants with elementary or middle school education. They work in low-skilled occupations, predominately in agriculture, farming, construction, and service industries. Their jobs are inherently low-paying, and their legal status can lower it even more (Hall, Greenman, and Farkas 2010). These families live in rural or urban areas with a high or growing concentration of Mexican population (Crowley, Lichter and Quian 2006), where their children attend segregated and underperforming schools (Crosnoe 2005; Logan, Minca and Adar 2012).

Besides their limited English abilities, parents in these families decide to use Spanish as a way to transmit their ethnic identity and because they want their children to be able to communicate with their extended family. Parents engage in frequent storytelling and enthusiastic celebrations of Mexican festivities. For them, maintaining their roots has an emotional component. Their children also participate in transnational events through their community in the US. Sometimes the family's involvement in cross-border activities is connected to membership in binational organizations tied to specific Mexican localities (Smith

2006). These networks and events play a significant role in children's understanding of Mexican culture, as well as their emotional connection to their ethnicity. Mass media, and cultural products such as telenovelas, also inform children's presentation of their Mexican identity.

Transnational contact with their kin and friends in Mexico is mostly limited to phone and video calls, social media, and very occasional remittances. Due to their undocumented status and their limited economic resources, parents may not be able to visit Mexico. These families can save and, with great sacrifice, send their children to Mexico for some time as a rite of passage that cements their bond to their community of ancestry.

These families often return hastily and involuntarily—though not always because of deportation—, and their networks provide crucial financial and emotional support. For example, adults may feel compelled to return to their homeland to say goodbye to a dying parent and introduce them to their grandchildren before they pass away —as was the case of Jose's family. In these cases, adults are aware that if they cross the US-Mexico border, they will not be able to return to the US.

Networks are crucial for transnational lower-class families because, besides emotional support and information, they provide financial resources. Lower-class families may not have the money to move to a nuclear household. Instead, they may need to join an already existing one. This increase in the number of members without a corresponding increase in income puts financial pressure on extended families.

Manuela's story exemplifies how the resources of lower-class transnational families shape the ways of being, forms of belonging, and subsequent incorporation of children. Karina, Manuela's mom, has a neurological disease. In the US, Manuela's father was physically and sexually abusive, but Karina did not have the monetary resources or knowledge to stop the situation. She was undocumented, and she was afraid of contacting the police. To a point, they

were relieved when he abandoned them. Karina always spoke Spanish at home—her Spanish is vernacular, and so was Manuela's. Karina and Manuela enjoyed Mexican food and Mexican soap operas. They did not have contact with other Mexicans—it was only the two of them.

The family maintained a strong connection to Mexico through phone calls with Dolores and her husband. For Manuela, being Mexican meant being close to her family. A health scare pushed Karina to return with Manuela to her family home in a semi-rural village in Zacatecas. Karina thought she was going to die, and she did not want Karina to end in foster care. She wanted her to stay with her grandparents. Manuela and Karina's return was hasty. They came back with only some clothes.

The four members of the household depended on Manuela's grandfather for income. He patches tires in a small shop. He is old, and he could barely work. Karina cannot work outside the house because of her medical condition. Their situation is precarious. They can go days without eating. Their return put considerable financial pressure on their kin. Manuela has no friends at school nor in her neighborhood. Students tease her because she is poor and shy, not because she was born and raised in the US. The vice-principal at Manuela's school describes Karina as a very active and supportive mother. Manuela has the highest GPA at school—something that teachers and school staff credit to her intelligence, hard work, and her mother's support. Manuela feels Mexican, and though she does not feel part of her town, she says Mexico is her home.

Table 7. Description of ideal types of distant families.

Class	**Parental education**	**Parental occupation**	**Household linguistic practices**	**Ways of being**	**Ways of belonging**	**Context of return**	**Incorporation**
Upper and upper-middle-class	College degree or graduate school.	High-status, high-skilled, high-paying jobs (See **Error! Reference source not found.**).	Parents want their families to incorporate as quickly as possible in their adopted country. They chose not to speak their native language with their children. Since parents are fluent in the language of the country of destination, communication is not a problem.	Parents avoid traditional celebrations or cultural practices that connect their family to their homeland. Instead, they seek to adopt the cultural traditions of the mainstream society in their country of destination.	Ethnic iidentity not a relevant topic in the household. The family's ethnic origin may not be explicitly denied or denigrated, but it can be a silent topic. The family's socioeconomic status may give them some room to negotiate their ethnic identity. The family may communicate to their kin and friend in their country of origin, but these communications may have a distant tone, and children may be encouraged to see themselves as different.	Returns are rare, and would mostly be involuntary.	The family has the monetary resources to relocate and maintain their class status. Nonetheless, they will face the high emotional costs that come with going to a place that they somewhat rejected. The children struggle with adapting due to the negative connotation that their parents conveyed about their homeland. Though they enroll in elite educational institutions, they may struggle to incorporate due to the frustration of the move. However, these children may slowly build their social networks in their home. These networks can include kin.
Middle class	High school or college degree.	See**Error! Reference source not found.**	Parents want their families to incorporate as rapidly as possible in their adopted country. They chose not to speak their native language with their children. The parents may be able to use their knowledge of the language of the country of destination to communicate with their children. If they are not proficient, they will make an effort to learn it to stop speaking their native language at home.	Parents avoid traditional celebrations or cultural practices that connect their family to their homeland. Instead, they seek to adopt the cultural traditions of the mainstream society in their country of destination.	Ethnic identity can be an "elephant in the room" issue in the household. The family's ethnic origin may not be explicitly denied or denigrated, but it can be a silent topic. The family may communicate to their kin and friend in their country of origin, but these communications may have a distant tone, and children may be encouraged to see themselves as different.	Returns are involuntary.	The family can experience monetary and emotional difficulties during their relocation. Depending on their reason and context of return, they may experience downward social mobility. The children struggle with adapting due to the negative connotation that their parents conveyed about their homeland. The children are not proficient in the language, and this puts them in a difficult situation. They will struggle at school, especially if they attend public institutions that do not have resources for language learners. However, these children may slowly build their social networks in their home. These networks can include kin.

Table 7 (Cont.). Description of ideal types of distant families.

Class	**Parental education**	**Parental occupation**	**Household linguistic practices**	**Ways of being**	**Ways of belonging**	**Context of return**	**Incorporation**
Lower-middle class, Lower class	High school education or less.	SeeN.	The parents may be able to use their knowledge of the language of the country of destination to communicate with their children. If they are not proficient, they will make an effort to learn it to stop speaking their native language at home.	Parents avoid traditional celebrations or cultural practices that connect their family to their homeland. Instead, they seek to adopt the cultural traditions of the mainstream society in their country of destination.	Ethnic identity is a taboo topic in the household. The family's ethnic origin may not be explicitly denied or denigrated, but it can be a silent topic. However, ethnicity can be a problematic issue, and immigrants may be trying to distance themselves from their ethnic community if they believe such distance will help them incorporate faster. Another possibility is that the ethnic community has a negative reputation, and maintaining a distance can be a strategy to avoid downward mobility and discrimination. The family may communicate to their kin and friends in their country of origin, but these communications may have a distant tone, and children may be encouraged to see themselves as different.	Returns are involuntary.	The family experiences monetary and emotional duress during their relocation. Depending on their reason and context of return, they may experience downward social mobility. The children struggle with adapting due to the negative connotation that their parents conveyed about their homeland. The children are not proficient in the language, and this puts them in a difficult situation. They will struggle at school, especially if they attend public institutions that do not have resources for language learners. However, these children may slowly build their social networks in their home. These networks can include kin.

Distant families

Upper and upper-middle-class distant families

These families are the least likely to return to Mexico, which is why I do not provide an extensive description of their relocation and incorporation process. I grouped the upper and upper-middle classes because the incorporation experiences of the children in both categories are similar. One of the advantages that come with privilege is a large degree of certainty and agency over family decisions. For these distant Mexican families, a high socioeconomic status means having legal residence and the possibility of building a comfortable life in the US. As part of their desire to incorporate into the US mainstream society, these Mexican families cut their connections to Mexico. Though children may be aware of their heritage, it is unlikely they will identify with as Mexican.

When it comes to household practices, parents decide to speak English at home. They may also dissuade their children from learning Spanish at school. The parents decide that the family will not celebrate Mexican festivities. Instead, they observe American celebrations in a manner that mimics the festivities of the mainstream white population. For example, families do not celebrate Mexican Independence and choose to have barbeques for the 4th of July.

If the family returns, their class status will help their children incorporate. Children will enroll in international or private schools. Their parents will make an enormous effort to support their academic performance, including paying tutors to help them learn Spanish. Depending on how much they reject their ethnic identity, the children may struggle to make friends. Contingent on the family history and reason for migration or return, the children may be able to connect

with members of their kin and get emotional support and knowledge-based resources to help them navigate in Mexico.

Distant middle-class families

Children of Mexican distant middle-class families struggle to incorporate in Mexico. Parents in this family type may view Mexican identity as a disadvantage that prevents them and their children from achieving a higher status in the US. Parents who are proficient in English forgo Spanish altogether. Parents who are not proficient in English make an effort to learn the language and eventually stop speaking Spanish at home. Parents try to have frequent contact with middle-class white American families that they meet through work or religious organizations. These Mexican families abstain from engaging in Mexican traditions and events with the Mexican community[19]. As a result, the children have very little—if any—knowledge about Mexico and its traditions. The children may also have an adverse emotional reaction to the label Mexican.

Returns are rare among these families, but they can happen as a result of dramatic events that lead the parents to lose their legal status or, for undocumented immigrants, as a result of deportation. Depending on the context, these families may have time and resources to plan their return. When these families relocate to Mexico, they are more likely to do so as a nuclear household than joining an extended household with their kin. The family may have resources to enroll their children in a low-cost or a non-elite private school, but often they will resort to the public school system. Middle-class children in private schools may find their academic journey

[19] This excludes joining Mexican-American communities in places like Texas or New Mexico who emphasize in their old roots in the US and distance themselves from Mexico. As I discuss ahead, these families emphasize the differences between Mexicans and Mexican-Americans.

a bit easier than those in public schools—which in Mexico have no programs for children who did not receive education in Spanish. Depending on the child's attitude, their negative views of Mexico and their lack of linguistic abilities can put them at a disadvantage with their teachers and other children.

While their extended families may not have been present in the children's lives, some members may embrace them. If so, kin will play a fundamental role as providers of emotional support, knowledge-based resources, and even economic means to ease their transition. With the help of their extended family, their incorporation will be more comfortable. If the family remains distant from their Mexico-based relatives, the children will face an uphill battle marked by anti-Americanism.

Distant lower-class and lower-middle-class families

The experiences of the distant lower-middle and lower are similar regarding the conditions of their return. Parents in these families may speak Spanish at home out of necessity. However, they try to learn English so it can eventually become the language spoken at home. Parents in these households substitute Mexican traditions with US traditions. They encourage their children to embrace an American identity and to distance themselves from Mexicans. These families learn how to be "American" from media and interactions with mainstream society. They also adopt practices from non-Mexican individuals in their networks, that they form through organizations like churches.

Returns among these families are not voluntary. Families may return due to deportation or other dramatic situations. Some examples are fear of crime, encounters with the police or immigration authorities, and unpayable debts that can land at least one of the parents in prison.

When the family relocates to Mexico, the children face a difficult situation. Due to their human-cultural capital, they may struggle to navigate middle-class institutions. The children

will enroll in public schools, where teachers and school staff cannot afford—and may not desire—to devote extra resources to help them learn Spanish. Their lack of linguistic abilities will affect their academic performance, and their family's financial situation will not allow them to get specialized tutors.

Their disconnection to their ethnic identity can lead the Mexican-born population to reject them. Another issue that complicates these children's incorporation is their reduced social connections in their new home. They may arrive without knowing anyone, and if their parents do not have a good relationship with their kin, they may find themselves highly isolated. However, depending on the overall family situation, kin may eventually embrace them and reach out to help them settle. As Zoe's story demonstrates the importance of self-identification and kin embracing Mexican-American children in spite of prior lack of contact.

Zoe is a 2.5 generation Mexican-American girl from a distant lower-class family who managed to integrate successfully—even though she was unfamiliar with Mexico and rejected her Mexican identity. Zoe is the daughter of a Mexican father and a second-generation Mexican mother. Zoe was born and raised in Texas, surrounded by her maternal Mexican-American family that does not use Spanish and feels proudly Texan. Her father, Armando, has elementary school education. He worked long hours to provide for his family. He speaks some English. He did not promote a Mexican identity in his household: he wanted his children to be American.

Before moving to Mexico, Zoe felt that Mexican and American were mutually exclusive categories—and she chose to be American. Zoe and Armando did not return as a family. Armando returned first—he was attacked by a gang who mistook him for someone else. He feared for his life, so he decided to go back to Mexico. He started a new family. Zoe stayed with her mother for a while, but then Armando asked to raise the girl.

Zoe did not speak Spanish when she arrived in Mexico, but she was happy to be with her father. She says that in the beginning, being American made her feel she was better than her Mexican peers. Zoe had never been to Mexico. She imagined the country as a horrible place: poor, desolate, backward, violent, and with nothing to offer. Initially, Zoe had no friends. She believes other children rejected her because she felt that, as an American, she was superior to Mexicans. She was miserable until she decided to change her attitude towards Mexico.

Even though they met her only when she moved to Mexico, Zoe's extended family embraced and cared for her. Her father, her father's wife—whom she is quite fond of—, her half-siblings, and her father's sister helped her learn Spanish. They showed her "how to be Mexican." At the time of the interview, she identified as Mexican because she speaks Spanish, lives in Mexico, and has Mexican friends. Zoe's story shows how distance can make returns difficult; but it also highlights how kin can step up due to a cultural sense of duty. Most significantly, her story demonstrates the crucial role of personal agency and the resiliency of children.

Most children from distant lower-middle and low class are not as lucky as Zoe, and they end up left-out of their new country of residence. All the children in my sample came from tight families—including Zoe, whose paternal family embraced her even though they met her only when she moved to Mexico. This tight-knit social network is not the reality of all Mexican-American children. In interviews and informal conversations with school principals, prefects, and social workers, I heard about Mexican-American children from disintegrated families who had very little, if any, knowledge of Mexico. These children, who were not proficient in Spanish, felt a strong rejection to their country of ancestry. Their returns had not been voluntary. Deportations, domestic violence, crime, and addiction were constantly mentioned as the reason

for return. These children came from poor households, and they did not have people in Mexico who would care for them.

In my interviews, school staff repeatedly said that, in Zacatecas, drug cartels often recruit Mexican-American children that drop out of school. Mexican-American children are attractive recruits: they speak English, and they can cross the border easily. Teachers, principals, and social workers have to turn a blind eye. Otherwise, they risk their lives. These stories support my argument that family resources and prior transnational activities and identities define how children incorporate in Mexico

Discussion and conclusion

This study highlights how transnational practices and family resources influence the integration of the children of return migrants. My main finding is that transnational practices and identities are the cornerstones of the incorporation of the foreign-born children of return migrants. My model highlights that the resources—monetary funds, social capital, and human-cultural capital—that influence transnational practices affect the incorporation process. However, I argue that—due to their nature—practices and identities before relocation should be understood as separate—though not independent—from those capitals.

My ideal types approach highlights how family resources and transnational experiences lead to diverse trajectories of incorporation. I use these types to provide detailed explanations of how differences in resources shape how children incorporate in Mexico. Then, I contrast my ideal types with qualitative data to explain the validity and limitations of my explanations.

Overall, Mexican-American children from highly transnational families had fewer difficulties incorporating. These children had the most robust ties to Mexico and were more involved in activities that brought them closer to their ancestral land. They arrived at a place where people loved and cared for them—and their relatives did everything they could to help

them adjust to life in Mexico. Mexican immigrants with financial means can visit Mexico or send their children to spend holidays there, which helps them become closer to their Mexican kin. They also put less strain on their network when they return. Finally, while social capital influences how much children interact with Mexico and thus how much they know about the country, human-cultural capital influences what children know about Mexico, and its usefulness is context-specific.

US-born children from lower-class backgrounds face a double disadvantage: the Spanish they speak is not the standard in middle-class institutions like schools, and most of the time their parents do not have the human-cultural capital to help them learn school material or to advocate for them at school. Children from families that struggle with poverty, domestic violence, and substance abuse are vulnerable to being recruited by gangs. Children in areas where migration is less established struggle more with prejudice and lack of support networks. Policy interventions aimed at incorporation need to consider that some of the most vulnerable Mexican-American children may not be at school and in areas with less migration tradition.

A crucial finding is that Mexican-American children can be in a liminal state of integration. While their family and friends may accept them as Mexican, interactions with institutions can highlight their citizenship status and alienate them from the broader community. Teachers and school staff are a crucial part of their incorporation, and they need information and more resources to help these children. Policy interventions like Spanish as a Second Language and specialized counseling for recently arrived Mexican-American children could help them stay and succeed at school.

Some of the limitations of this study come from my sample. I was not able to interview children who dropped out of school, and my sample is mostly female. A possible explanation is that Mexican-American girls in Zacatecas remain in school at higher rates than boys, or that

boys simply decided to stay in the US or to return by themselves. Further work should explore the integration process among Mexican-American children who left school, and the role of gender on the integration of Mexican-American children. The incorporation of Mexican-American children in Mexico is a binational policy issue. Though these children are currently in Mexico, many of them will likely return to the US.

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CHAPTER 3

TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS IN THE COMMUNITY AND THE INCORPORATION OF FOREIGN-BORN CHILDREN OF RETURN MIGRANTS IN THEIR ANCESTRAL LAND. THE CASE OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN IN MEXICO[20].

Introduction

Even though migration impacts the lives of millions of people around the world, there are few studies on migrant children (Donato & Duncan, 2011), and even fewer studies on the lives of the children of return migrants who settle in their ancestral country. Scholars increasingly understand international migration as a complex phenomenon that extends beyond a one-way movement (Cassarino, 2004). Besides the fact that migrants maintain ties to their homeland, some of them return to their homeland—sometimes with their foreign-born children (Gonzalez Barrera, 2015; Moctezuma, 2013). However, there is little understanding of the impact of return migration on the children of return migrants and how the transnational connections help them incorporate into their new home. Furthermore, in spite of the increasing interest on return migration (Cassarino, 2004), the relationship between transnational ties in a community—large-scale connections in a community that extend beyond kin (Faist, 2000; Roberts, Frank, Lozano-Ascencio, 1999)—and the incorporation of the foreign-born children of return migrants remains unexplored.

[20] I am indebted to Filiz Garip, Victor Nee, Richard Swedberg, and Hillary Holbrow for their comments on previous versions of this paper.

Even though foreign-born children of return migrants and the native-born population in the ancestral country share racial backgrounds and although these children are probably not complete strangers to their parental land, their integration is not straight-forward. These children face nativist attitudes, lack of cultural proficiency paired with high cultural expectations of the native-born population (e.g., Smith, 2006; Vazquez, 2011; Zuñiga & Hamann, 2015), and even problems with citizenship status (Medina & Menjivar, 2015; Yamamoto, 2010).

The scarce research on the outcomes of the offspring of return migrants and ethnic child migrants—children who return to their ethnic ancestral land, but not specifically the second generation (Tsuda, 2009)—suggests that these children are received like strangers in their country of ethnic origin. These children encounter social, structural, and institutional barriers to their education, which negatively affects their school enrollment and achievement (e.g. Dutch-Moroccan in Morocco: de Bree & Bartels, 2011; Japanese-Brazilians and other Japanese ancestry children in Japan: Takenoshita, Chitose, Ikegami & Ishikawa, 2014; Yamamoto, 2010; Mexican-Americans in Mexico: Medina & Menjivar, 2015; Russian people of German origin in Germany: Klekowski von Koopenfels, 2009). To date, research on the lives of children of return and ethnic migrants has studied families and individual agency (de Bree & Bartels, 2011; Takenoshita, Chitose, Ikegami & Ishikawa, 2014) or macro-level variables such as government policies that result in their exclusion (Yamamoto, 2010). However, no studies have analyzed the connection between transnationalism, transnational ties in a community and the integration of the children of return migrants in their ancestral home.

Generally speaking, most of the literature of transnationalism that discusses the role of social networks can be sorted into two broad areas. The first focuses on immigrants and immigrant groups in the destination country. This area encompasses studies that look at how immigrants use their social networks based in their community of origin to establish themselves

in their country of destination, and how ethnic and cultural traits and social practices from their place of origin shape immigrant incorporation and the assimilation of their descendants. Though not explicitly framed as transnationalism, studies that look at the role of individual and community networks for international migration can fit into this category because they show how connections formed in the place of origin of migrants aid migrants get to the destination country (e.g. Boyd, 1989; Garip, 2008; Garip & Asad, 2016; Kandel & Massey, 2002; Massey, Goldring & Durand, 1994; McKenzie & Rapoport, 2010; Palloni, Massey, Ceballos, Espinosa & Spitte, 2001). Transnational social networks assist individuals in migrating and settling in their new home (Alba & Nee, 2003; Kivisto, 2001; Levitt, 2014; Nee & Sanders, 2001; Smith, 2006).

In this respect, studies show that communities that have strong migration tradition often have dense networks and even "satellite" communities in the country of destination (Rouse, 1991; Smith, 2006), which has significant implications for the incorporation of migrants and their access to housing, jobs, and public services (e.g. Hagan, 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2007; Light & Gold, 2000; Munshi, 2003). However, this literature does not explain how transnational networks in the community could shape the incorporation of the foreign-born children of return migrants because for them the distinction between the country of origin and destination is not as clear. Furthermore, not all of these children have personal connections to their country of ancestry, and membership in the transnational community could be rooted in the diaspora rather than in the community networks from their place of origin. However, this literature points to the fact that transnational community networks can play a role in the incorporation of migrants if they provide them with social and cultural tools to navigate their new home, or if they generate conditions that increase their access to public services.

The second broad area of transnationalism explores the effects of transnational activities of the diaspora on the native-born population in the communities of origin of migrants and on the sending country. At the individual level, this area looks at how migrants' activities shape the lives of the people they leave behind. For example, the impact of remittances on families and cultural changes in a migrant's network that are connected to her transnational activities (Curran & Saguy, 2001; Sana, 2005). When we think about the impact on the communities, we can think about the role of individual migrants or migrant communities in their place of origin. Even though not all migrants engage in economic or political transnational activities, studies suggest that those who do can have a substantial impact on their community of origin (Guarnizo, Portes & Haller, 2003; Portes, 2003; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Stephen, 2007).

Migrants also form organizations to engage in transnational collective actions to influence their place of origin. For example, migrant organizations can run political structures that aim to change governmental practices in their place of origin (Portes, Guarnizo & Landolt, 1999; Smith, 1998, 2006); or they can form migrant associations that engage in social, cultural, and economic development projects in their homeland (Castles, 2006; Conway & Cohen, 2009; Garcia-Zamora, 2007; Goldring, 2004; Levitt, 1998). These activities have profound consequences in the sending countries. Another result of the actions of transnational communities is that they act as cultural bridges that import sociocultural elements from their community of origin. At their place of birth, migrants deliver sociocultural items from their country of destination, which alters the social and cultural norms of their homeland. One of the cultural transformations that migration brings to communities of origin is the normalization of the children of migrants, as these children may be sent for the holidays to visit "home." However, this normalization does not mean that the children are viewed as native-born because stereotypes rooted in xenophobia and prejudices against the country of destination remain

(Smith, 2006). This broad area of literature makes the incorporation of foreign-born children a puzzling issue.

On the one hand, if they are normalized in the community, they can increase their likelihood of being socially included. On the other hand, the extent of stereotypes can negatively alter their possibility of inclusion, and they can become targets of xenophobia if the group becomes a scapegoat. Furthermore, even if exposure to foreign-born individuals in their ethnic homeland normalizes their presence as visitors, the literature of ethnic migrant children shows that their normalization does not fully grant access to schools due to legal, cultural, and other resource-driven barriers to their education.

The third area of the literature on transnationalism is smaller and more recent. This area explores the role of transnational networks and transnational activities on return migration (Cassarino, 2004; Reynolds, 2010) and how these networks help return migrants reincorporate in their place of origin (Duval, 2004). However, this body of research still involves individuals returning to their country of birth, not foreign-born people going to their country of ancestry. This distinction has considerable implications due to citizenship and legal status, and—as previously mentioned—discrimination. Some ethnographic studies have shown that the normalization of return migration shapes how communities view return migrants, and how return migrants reincorporate at home. However, the literature has not explored how communities in which migration, return migration, and other types of transnational connections are ubiquitous affect the incorporation and access to services of the children of return migrants.

This study fills the gap in the literature on the connection between transnational ties in communities of origin of migrants and the incorporation of the foreign-born children of return migrants in their place of origin. Most specifically, how transnational relations in the sending country affect access to schooling among the foreign-born children of return migrants. This

study uses a mixed-methods approach to explore the connection of transnational networks in Mexican communities and school enrollment among Mexican-American children in Mexico.

The research question that guides this study is “What is the connection between the density of transnational connections in Mexican communities and the likelihood of school enrollment of Mexican-American children in Mexico?”. To answer this question, I estimate multivariate descriptive logit models using publicly available data from Mexican official sources. I estimate separate sets of models by age groups that match educational levels in Mexico, as factors that affect school enrollment change across educational stages (Torche, 2010). I build a dataset using publicly available administrative data from the Mexican government. My sources are the 2015 Mexican Intercensal Survey, the 2010 Mexican Migration Intensity Index, and the 2015 Mexican Social Margination Index. My dataset has information on school enrollment, place of birth, length of residence, family sociodemographic characteristics, municipality of residence, transnational connections in the municipality (share of migrants to the US, return migrants, circular migrants, and households that receive remittances), and other socioeconomic characteristics of the municipality. I discuss my results using qualitative data from interviews with school administrative staff and teachers from urban and rural schools in Zacatecas, Mexico—a state with a substantial migration tradition.

Previous ethnographic work on school enrollment among Mexican-American children in Mexico shows that Mexican-American children struggle to enroll in school due to their citizenship status, discrimination and burdensome bureaucratic procedures (Medina & Menjivar, 2015). This literature sheds light on some mechanisms behind possible social exclusion, but it does not explain if Mexican-American children are also excluded in areas where transnationalism makes them “less foreign." Earlier quantitative work on the topic shows that family socioeconomic traits are crucial and that children who have been living in Mexico

for longer are more likely to be enrolled in school (Glick & Yabiku, 2016), and although it accounts for children who live in border regions it does not reflect the complexity of migration in Mexico and the role of more local variables. This study contributes to previous work on the topic by introducing transnational community networks in Mexico as factors connected to Mexican-American children's school enrollment.

My results suggest that transnational networks in the Mexican municipalities are connected to Mexican-American children's school enrollment in Mexico. Like previous studies (Glick & Yabiku, 2016; Rendall & Torr, 2008), I find that Mexican-American children who have been living in Mexico for longer have higher school enrollment rates than those who have been in Mexico for less time and that Mexican-born children. Mexican-American children who live in areas that have denser transnational networks are more likely to be enrolled in school. On top of this effect for Mexican-American children regardless of the length of residency, those who have been in Mexico for less time gain an additional advantage if they live in municipalities with more transnational ties. However, the saliency of the factors that affect school enrollment among these children varies across educational stages.

My findings have important theoretical implications because they suggest that the density of transnational networks in the communities of origin of return migrants has consequences on the incorporation of their foreign-born children. This means that transnational networks in communities are essential bridges that have a prominent role in return migration. I suggest that denser community transnational networks in Mexico are associated with more social support, less discrimination, and the institutionalization of resources that allow Mexican-American children to surpass bureaucratic obstacles to school enrollment. Besides their theoretical importance, my findings have crucial implications for educational policy in Mexico, as they point to the fact that Mexican-American children in areas with limited transnational

connections are a vulnerable population, particularly at later educational stages. The education and human capital formation of these children is relevant for Mexico and the United States, as some of them will join the labor force of their country of birth. As such, this is a policy issue that has binational consequences. Given the current political discourse in the US, research on the outcomes of Mexican-American children in Mexico is urgent.

Transnational community networks

For most people, the word "community" evokes a group of people in a geographical area: a neighborhood, a town, etc. More abstractly, a community is a series of social networks that are not always confined by physical space (Piselli, 2007). Transnational communities are a series of social networks that have their origin in an earthly location and extend beyond physical geography, cutting across national borders (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004; Vertovec, 2003). Chronologically speaking, transnational communities originate in the place of origin of migrant communities and expand into the place of destination of migration. We can think of transnational connections—individual ties, community links, cross-national organizations —as a bridge that connects the place of origin and the place of destination. Like physical bridges, people and resources can traverse "transnational bridges" in two directions: from the country of origin to the country of destination—international migration (Boyd, 1989; Garip & Asad, 2016)—and backward—like remittances and return migration (Vertovec, 2004). The movements can be repeated and systematic, but they do not need to be symmetric. For example, people may use the bridge to migrate and settle—crossing in one direction—and then use it to send resources back home without returning to their place of origin. Another salient aspect of these connections is that people and communities on one side of the transnational bridge will influence those on the other side. To date, most of the literature concentrates on the role of transnational connections for international migration and the incorporation of the immigrant

generation who leaves their country of ethnic ancestry. This literature shows the underlying mechanisms through which transnational networks influence the lives of members of transnational communities. Thus, it is essential to understand how transnational community networks work to explore why they would matter for the incorporation of the children of return migrants—immigrants in their country of ethnic ancestry—, especially when it comes to access to schooling (Glick & Yabiku, 2016; Medina & Menjivar, 2015).

Transnational community networks and international migration: the origin of transnational ties.

Transnational social networks are a crucial element of international migration. Studies from various migrations around the world show that having kin and friends who migrated increases the likelihood of individual migration (e.g., Garip, 2008). But family and friends are not the only connections that matter for migrants. In the particular case of the Mexican-US migration, the evidence demonstrates that as migration becomes entrenched in the life of the community kin loses relevance for individual's migration (Winters, DeJanvry & Sadoulet, 2001). Among other things, this is because migration-related social capital accumulates in the community and its diaspora. When migration becomes ubiquitous, individuals do not need to have a close connection to someone who migrated to have information on migration. Besides, migration becomes more culturally acceptable, and the resources that aid migration can become institutionalized in the community—which means they are not dependent on personal networks (e.g. Garip & Asad, 2016; Kandel & Massey, 2002; Massey & España, 1987; Massey, Goldring & Durand, 1994; Mines, 1981; McKenzie & Rapoport, 2010; Palloni, Massey, Ceballos, Espinosa & Spitte, 2001; Roberts, Frank & Lozano-Ascencio, 1999).

Changes in Mexican sending communities origin with a solid migration tradition could have significant consequences for the incorporation of the children of return migrants. To begin with, areas where international migration is more frequent, are more likely to have stronger transnational connections than areas with little migration. This is because more members of the community are or have been abroad. Mexican communities with a strong migration tradition often have "satellite" communities abroad (Fawcett, 1989; MacDonald & MacDonald, 1964; Roberts, Frank & Lozano-Ascencio, 1999; Rouse, 1991). The activities of these satellites have profound implications for communities of origin, as I explain ahead. In addition to their actions, satellite communities can alter the culture and social norms in their place of birth just by existing. The population in communities with a steady migration tradition is more likely to be more exposed to the social and cultural traits of the country of destination—by personal migration, by someone they know, or just because transnational connections have social and cultural elements of the country of destination closer to home. This means that Mexican-American children of return migrants may not be as foreign in these places as they are in areas where migration is not as common. This normalization can have profound implications for discrimination and access to services like education.

Transnational community networks and immigrant incorporation: enclaves, social support, and access to services.

Social networks are a fundamental component of immigrant incorporation. At the individual level, the outcome of an immigrant's integration is profoundly affected by the resources in her network and by her exposure to the mainstream society in the destination country (Boyd, 1989; Nee & Sanders, 2001). In addition to an individual's networks, transnational community networks play a significant part in immigrant incorporation. As previously mentioned, the evidence suggests that Mexican communities with high levels of

migration often have satellite communities in the US. These community networks help migrants integrate into their new home. They provide migrants with job opportunities, housing, and information on the country of destination (Hagan, 1998; Light, 2004; MacDonald & MacDonald, 1964; Roberts, Frank & Lozano-Ascencio, 1999; Mines, 1981; Rouse, 1991). These small enclaves have significant consequences for the integration of immigrants.

There is an ongoing conversation about the implications of enclaves for immigrant incorporation, the importance of ethnic cohesion on life outcomes, and the role of social capital on immigrants' access to services. There is mixed evidence on the impact of enclaves on the socioeconomic outcomes of immigrants, and there is a reason to believe that the effects of enclaves vary across immigrant groups. For Mexicans in the US, living in areas with a large concentration of their co-ethnics hurts their income (Logan, Zhang & Alba, 2002). However, there is some evidence that enclaves have positive effects on health outcomes of Mexican immigrants (e.g., Cagney, Browning & Wallace, 2007; Eschbach, Ostir, Patel, Markides & Goodwin, 2004; Kim, Collins, Grineski, 2014). These positive outcomes can be explained by social support in the community (Hong, Zhang & Walton, 2014; Mulvaney-Day, Alegría & Sribney, 2007), which is connected to access to services because social capital aids the transmission of accumulated experience and language skills of other members of the community (Choi, 2009; Park, 2012 Pih, Hirose & Mao, 2012; Reierson & Celedón-Pattichis, 2014).

Another essential aspect of access to services is that population density can increase the availability of options that respond to the needs of the ethnic community, including schools. This improvement in access happens because communities can organize to establish those services (e.g., Chinese and Korean language schools: Bankston & Zhou, 2002; Kao, 2004; Zhou & Kim, 2006). Or, given demand, the government or entrepreneurs respond by providing services for these immigrant communities (Portes & Manning, 1986; Wainer, 2004; Zhou &

Logan, 1989). However, all of these studies review the experiences of the foreign-born population in an ethnically and culturally different country.

Mexican-American children of return migrants are often singled out as foreigners in Mexico (Smith, 2006), and there is research on how discrimination and citizenship status puts them in a vulnerable position concerning access to services (Jacobo, 2017; Latapi, 2014; Medina & Menjivar, 2017). In this respect, transnational community networks in the community of origin can play a similar role to the one that migrant networks play for the incorporation of migrants in the country of destination. There is some evidence that in places with strong return migration and circular traditions, social norms do not view individuals who return as atypical (Smith. 2006). In these places, social networks—often with a high number of individuals with migration experience—help returnees to reincorporate upon arrival by aiding them with housing and job opportunities (Espinosa Marquez & Gonzalez Ramirez 2016; Rivera Sanchez, 2013; Wheatley, 2017). In communities with robust transnational networks, these foreign-born children may be more likely to find social support because there could be other children like them, or because a more significant share of the population has US-born kin or acquaintances. This has significant consequences for normalization. Also, a large concentration of immigrant children could increase access to services because of social support and supply-side mechanisms.

Transnational community networks and changes in the community of origin

Transnational community networks have a strong political, economic, and cultural influence in their place of origin (Faist, 2000; Goldring, 2004; Itzigsohn, 2000; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2006; Rapoport & Docquier, 2006; Vertovec, 2004). There is consistent evidence that Mexican migrants in satellite communities in the US organize to influence the political life of their hometown. Sometimes these communities are socially obligated to participate in their

hometown's government (Stephen, 2007), and other times they organize because they want to influence and engage on important decisions (Perez-Armendariz & Crow, 2009; Smith, 1998; 2006). The salience of Mexican migrant communities in the US is such that states like Zacatecas, Durango, Chiapas, and Guerrero have congressmen to represent the interests of migrants in their local congress. In sum, even when they are far, large migrant transnational communities often keep a close eye on the political life of their place of origin. A possible implication is that migrant communities could pressure their representatives and other elected officials to push for policies that help the incorporation of the children of return migrants.

Transnational migrant communities also shape the economy of the place of origin of migrants, mostly through remittances or development projects (De Haas, 2005, 2006; Orozco, 2002; Rapoport & Docquier, 2006; Sana & Massey, 2005; Taylor, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Massey & Pellegrino, 1996). Numerous studies on the impact of remittances in Mexico show that, besides the impact on individual households, in the aggregate level remittances can alter the economic development and the social stratification of communities (Conway & Cohen, 1998; Garip, 2012; Massey & Basem, 1992; Massey & Parrado, 1996; Sana, 2005).

Besides this uncoordinated remittance-sending, Mexican migrants from satellite communities can form migrant organizations and investment projects (Fox & Bada, 2008; Orozco & Rouse, 2013). These projects aim to improve sending communities through economic development and better public services (Portes & Zhou, 2012). Given their financial resources and the strength of their ties to their hometowns, local and state governments have institutionalized the participation of migrant clubs and organizations (Goldring, 2002). Through the Program 3x1 (Programa 3x1), the Mexican federal, state, and local authorities match the resources that migrant clubs pool for development projects in their community (Garcia-Zamora, 2007). This transnational development strategy further increases and institutionalizes the

presence of the diaspora in their homeland, which can have significant consequences in the life of the community beyond the economic impact of the projects. One of them can be that migrant organizations have more bargaining power with local authorities, potentially having a say in regional policy issues. This is important because strong advocacy can increase children's access to services beyond the negotiation resources of individual households. However, it is important to note that this mutual investment program tends to favor wealthier migrant communities that can afford to gather resources to invest back home (Aparicio & Meseguer, 2012). This means that, at the institutional and political level, the influence of transnational community ties on local policy can be affected by the economic resources of its migrants. The implication is that not all places with dense transnational communities have the resources to pressure Mexican authorities to support the children of return migrants.

Finally, transnational community networks modify social and cultural norms in their community of origin by "importing" sociocultural elements from the country of destination (Levitt, 1998; Levitt & Lamba-Nieves, 2011). In Mexico, individual migrants and transnational community networks have imported cultural and social practices from the US. The influence of American culture brought by the transnational communities has a wide array of visible manifestations in Mexico. For example, food habits, consumption patterns, cultural codes in dressing and speech, changes in gender roles, and even the architectural style of dwellings in areas with a strong migration tradition (Lynn Lopez, 20110; Paris Pombo, 2010; Smith, 2006; Stephen, 2007). Besides, in communities with robust transnational connections, Mexican-American children are normalized, as their frequent visits make them a part of the society (Smith, 2006). The adoption of US cultural practices, changes in social norms, and the regular presence of Mexican-American children can have a profound effect in Mexican communities, possibly redefining what "locals" understand as the mainstream society (Jimenez, 2017). The

implication is that Mexican-Americans could be considered members of the community, which would decrease discrimination.

Higher numbers of Mexican-American children in a community can have implications for schooling services and the experiences of Mexican-American children in schools. First, a higher concentration of these children could increase the probability of schools that consider their needs. Furthermore, a higher number of Mexican-American children in an area could increase social support, which has significant consequences for children's school outcomes (Suarez-Orozco, Pimentel & Martin, 2009).

Mexican return migration, Mexican citizenship and mixed-status families in Mexico

There is consistent evidence that US immigration policies and the 2008 Economic Recession altered migration patterns between Mexico and the US. One of the primary shifts was that the net migration rate became negative (González Barrera, 2015). Data shows that return migration—including involuntary returns— peaked in 2006 and is predominantly composed of men (Figure 16). The increase in working-age return migrants is another critical change of the return migration flow after the Recession. As data shows, the most extensive age group among both male and female return migrants are individuals that 18 to 29 years old and 30 to 45 years old (Figure 17). Though there are gender differences in the distribution of motives of return such as unemployment and deportation, both men and women mention family reasons as the most frequent reason to go back to Mexico (Figure 18).

Figure 16. Return migration from the US to Mexico (2005 - 2015). Source: ENOE.

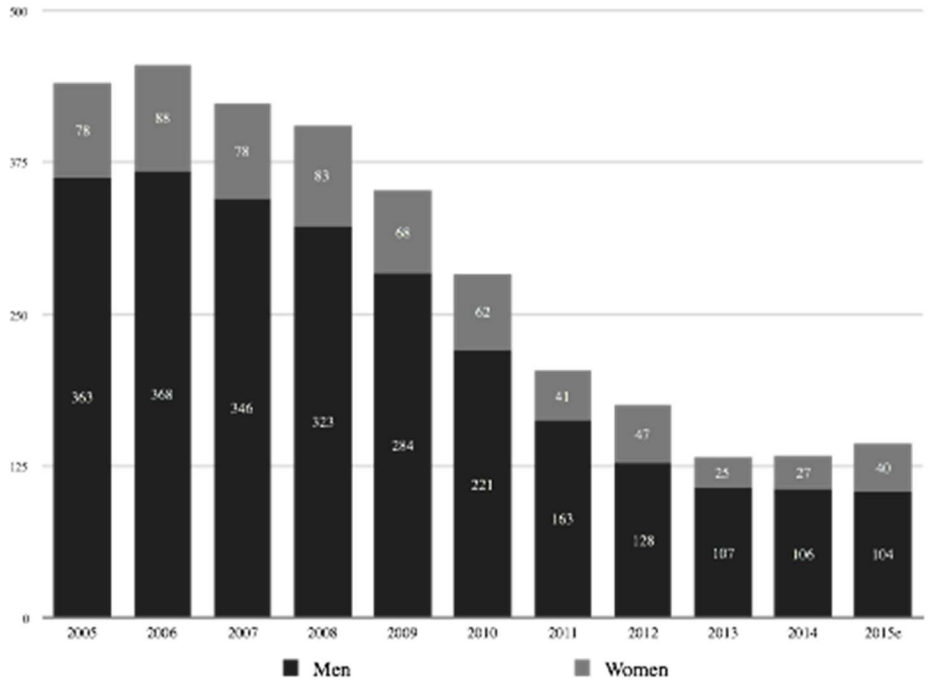


Figure 17. Age or retutn, by gender. Source: National Survey of Demographic Dynamics 2014 (Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica, ENADID). Taken from the Yearbook of migration and remittances Mexico 2016 (p. 82).

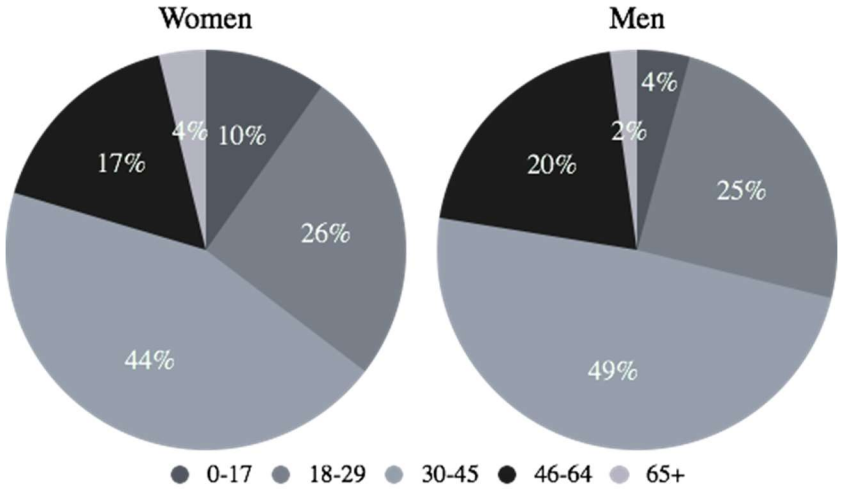


Figure 18. Reasons for return (2009-2014). Source: INEGI. National Survey of Demographic Dynamics 2014 (Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica, ENADID) (INEGI, 2015, p. 11).

A crucial shift in return migration after the Recession that is connected with changes in the age of return migrants has been the increase in individuals who move back to Mexico with their family, including their US-born children (Gandini, Lozano-Ascencio & Gaspar Olvera, 2015; González Barrera, 2015; Moctezuma, 2013). There is some research that suggests that mixed-status families struggle to incorporate due to the citizenship status of their members (Medina & Menjivar, 2015). It is important to note that Mexican nationality laws establish that foreign-born children of Mexican nationals are entitled to Mexican citizenship. In the last few years, the Mexican Government has led campaigns to inform migrants that their children have this right, that they will not lose their US citizenship, and that having Mexican citizenship can give their children access to public services if the child moves to Mexico. The process has no cost, but it needs to be done in person at a consulate or embassy or Mexican offices in Mexico.

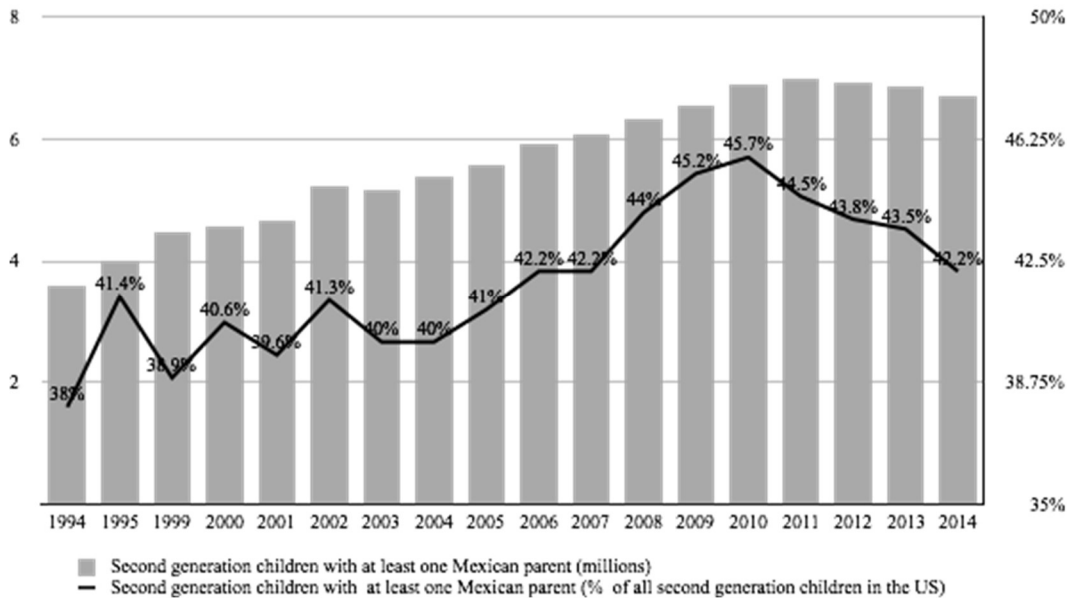
Parents need to have valid documents proving their Mexican nationality. Also, the process can be complicated for children born out of wedlock[21]. It is essential to mention that there is no publicly available data on the number of requests for Mexican citizenship for US-born children of Mexican parents. Though research on Mexican-American children in Mexico is scarce, scholars have called attention to the fact that citizenship and documentation are obstacles to access to public services (Latapi, 2016; Medina & Menjivar, 2015; Orozco, 2017).

Mexican-American children in Mexico

Data from the US Current Population Survey (CPS) suggests that over the last few years, there has been a decrease in the number of Mexican-American children living in the US. In 2011 there were approximately 6.99 million US-born children in the US who had at least one Mexican parent. By 2014, the population decreased to 6.71 million (Figure 19) (Childtrends, 2014). There is no publicly available information on changes in the size of the population of Mexican-American children living in Mexico between those years. However, given the changes in the age and family composition of return migration (Gandini, Lozano-Ascencio & Gaspar Olvera, 2015; González Barrera, 2015; Moctezuma, 2013), it is not unreasonable to believe that a significant share of the US-born Mexican children who left the US relocated to Mexico.

[21] Children born to married parents can be registered by one parent provided that there is a marriage certificate. If the parents of the child are not legally married the procedure requires both to be present or a notary-certified document that states that the father has agreed to the registration of the child with his last name.

Figure 19. Second generation Mexican children in the US. Source: Immigrant Children: Indicators of Child and Youth well-being (Childtrends, 2014, p.15).

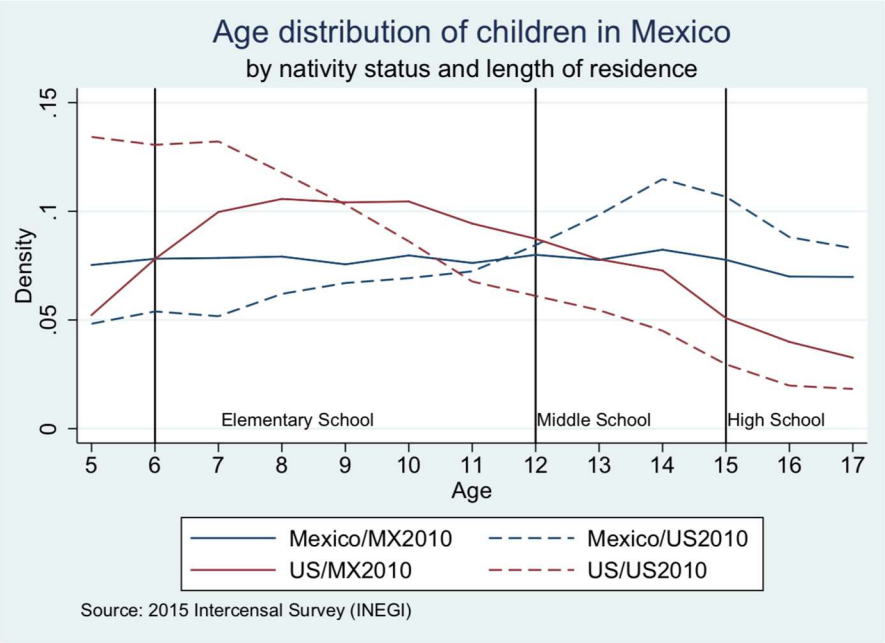


As of 2015, about 784,300 Mexican-American children ages 0 to 17 years old were living in Mexico[22]. Figure 20 depicts the age distribution of Mexican-American children and Mexican-born children who are between 6 and 17 years old and live in Mexico. The first thing that can be observed is that the age distribution of Mexican-American children is biased towards younger ages. This bias is more pronounced among those who arrived after 2010. In contrast to the age distribution of native-born children, the age distribution of Mexican-American children in Mexico has a peak in the 6 to 12 years old range, followed by a sharp decrease (Figure 20). An explanation for the age bias in the distribution is that young Mexican-American children are sent to Mexico to spend part of their childhood and then return to the US (Rendall & Torr, 2008). The stronger bias among more recently arrived Mexican-American children can be caused by

[22] Estimation is my own. Data comes from the 2015 Mexican Intercensal Survey (INEGI, 2015)

the changing profile of return migrants and the increase in working-age men and women who are more likely to have young children than migrants in other age groups.

Figure 20. Age distribution of Mexican and Mexican-American children in Mexico. Source: 2015 Intercensal Survey (estimates my own).



Mexican-American children's access to education in Mexico

Even though they are part of one of the largest transnational migrant communities in the world, there is very little research on Mexican-American children who relocate to Mexico. The available literature on Mexican-American children in schools suggests that these children face high expectations of cultural competency and that their incorporation in Mexico is not without difficulties (Ramirez-Flores, s/f). The available literature suggests that Mexican-American children struggle to enroll in schools due to burdensome bureaucratic procedures and discrimination. Before 2015, bureaucratic regulations required Mexican-American children to present their birth certificate and school documents with apostilles and translated by a provider authorized by the Mexican authorities. This became a high barrier for Mexican-American

children's enrollment. Apostilles are costly, time-consuming, and in many cases, they require parents to go to US offices in person—something that deportees could not do—or to have someone in the US with powers of attorney. Also, the required translators charged fees that were too high for many families (Jacobo, 2017). In 2015 the Federal government eliminated the apostle requirement, but Mexican-American children still needed to have their Mexican Unique Identification (CURP), which was a separate bureaucratic procedure that required proof of citizenship or immigration status[23]. Though Mexican-American children are no longer asked to present documents with apostilles there is a reason to believe that some administrative personnel still demand such documents, which has negative consequences for Mexican-American children's school enrollment (Jacobo, 2017).

After they manage to enroll in Mexican schools, Mexican-American children face additional obstacles that can lead to them dropping out. Research on transnational students—including Mexican-American children who were schooled in the US—shows that Mexican schools are not equipped to aid their incorporation. Unlike the US system, Mexican public schools do not have programs for children whose primary language is not Spanish[24], which means that these children face linguistic barriers without formal institutional support. Due to their lack of written and reading language abilities and the fact that they are not familiar with Mexican history and geography, school principals often send Mexican-American children one or two years back. This causes frustration among Mexican-American students.

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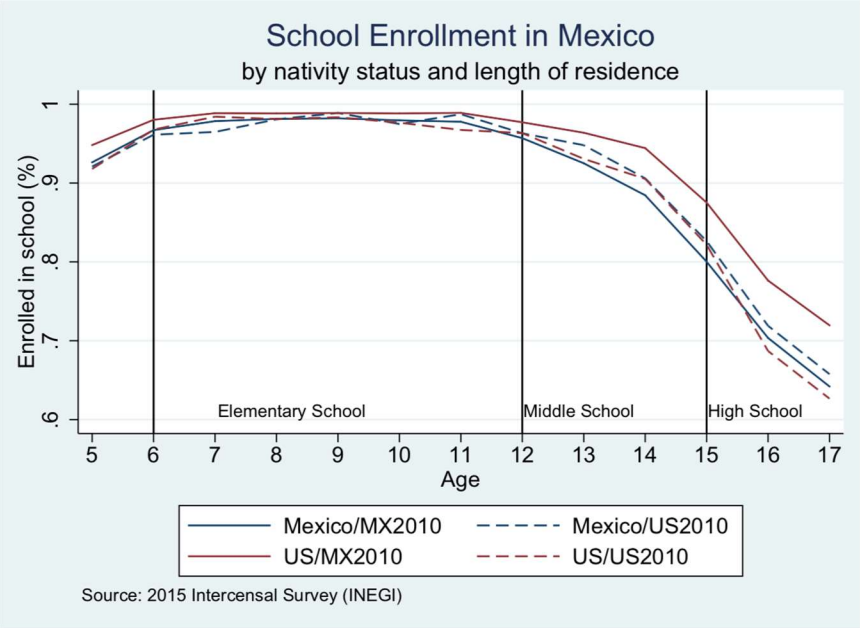
[23] As a response to the Trump Presidency, the Mexican Congress passed a bill on March 2017 altering the requirements of proof of Mexican citizenship. As of the 3rd of March of that year, the birth certificate of the child (apostille not required) together with the birth certificate of the Mexican parent(s) is considered proof of citizenship.

[24] Except for Indigenous schools, which operate using indigenous languages as the baseline, and then children learn Spanish.

On top of that, there is evidence that Mexican-American children are put at a disadvantage due to their "invisibility" in Mexican schools. These children have the same ethnic background as their native-born peers, and their names do not stand out. There are some documented cases in which teachers or principals thought students were lazy because they never participated and had poor school performance, only to find out the children were Mexican-American and that they spoke very little Spanish. However, Mexican-American children also suffer when they become visible for negative reasons. Research suggests that these children face Anti-Americanism and that they face high expectations of cultural competency. When Mexican-Americans fail to meet these expectations they are chastised as "foreigners" and pointed out as "not real Mexicans" (Zúñiga, 2008; Hamann, Zúñiga & Sánchez García, 2006; Panait & Zúñiga, 2016; Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009; 2015, Zúñiga & Sánchez García, 2016; Zúñiga, Hamann & Sánchez García, 2008). These negative school experiences can push Mexican-American children out of Mexican schools. As Figure 21 shows, Mexican-American children seem to be vulnerable to dropping out or not enrolling in school at earlier and later school years.

Figure 21. School enrollment among Mexican and Mexican-American children in Mexico. Source: 2015 Intercensal Survey (INEGI, 2015). Estimations are my own.



Data

Quantitative Data

I constructed a dataset using three publicly available sources of administrative data: (1) the 2015 Intercensal Survey, (2) the 2010 Municipality Marginalization Index, and (3) the 2010 Intensity of Migration Index. The Mexican National Population Council (CONAPO) estimates the last two using Census and other administrative data like Intercensal Surveys. The 2015 Intercensal Survey is collected by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), the Mexican office in charge of collecting population and economic data, such as the census. The Intercensal Survey is representative at the national, state, and municipal levels. It has information on children's place of birth, length of residency, and school enrollment. The survey also has data on parental education and household characteristics. The 2010 Intensity of Migration Index uses data from the 2010 Mexican Census. It has information on 2,443 of the

2,456[25] municipalities in 2010 (99.5%) (CONAPO, 2012). To estimate the Index, the CONAPO uses a principal components analysis that looks at the share of households with international migrants, return migrants, circular migrants, as well as those who receive remittances (CONAPO, 2012). I use the estimation corresponding to the municipality level[26]. The last source of data is the 2015 Municipality Marginalization Index (CONAPO, 2016), which uses data from the 2015 Intercensal Survey. The Marginalization Index dataset provides information on social disadvantages at the municipality level. This index uses the most recent population data on social exclusion. It is representative at the municipality level.

I assembled the initial dataset by appending the information of the Intercensal Survey, which has a separate file for each one of the 31 states and Mexico City (32 files in total). Then, using this file that contains national information, I created three separate files to be able to merge the data of mothers and fathers to children. I generated a unique identification code to link each child to her mother and her father (I did the merge for each parent separately). The next step was to match the dataset containing children and parental information to data on the municipality. The Intercensal Survey includes information on the municipality in which individuals live, and I used this information to merge my Intercensal Survey dataset with the Migration Intensity and Marginalization indexes. This initial dataset had 8,120,178 observations representing 39,214,411 individuals aged 0 to 17 that live in the Mexican territory. However, this initially included children who are not Mexican-born or Mexican-American and children

[25]This includes the political-administrative units of Mexico City, which are known as delegations but are akin to municipalities and the CONAPO treats them as such in their datasets.

[26]There is considerable variation in migration between and within states. States like Zacatecas, Guanajuato, Michoacán, and Puebla have high levels of migration. However, within each state, there are important variations in the intensity of migration of municipalities. That is the reason why I use data at the municipal level.

whose age does not allow me to look at differences connected to the length of residency. I discarded those observations. The resulting dataset has 5,343,732 observations that represent 26,008,808 children in Mexico ages 6 to 17 years old who were born in Mexico or the US but have at least one Mexican parent.

Qualitative Data

Data for this study comes from a more extensive ethnographic project on the connection between transnational practices and the incorporation of Mexican-American children in Mexico (Ramirez-Flores, s/f). I conducted 49 semi-structured interviews in six rural and urban communities in Zacatecas, Mexico[27]. I collected the data during the Summer of 2017, with support from the University of Zacatecas (UAZ). Zacatecas is a state in Central-North Mexico that has a longstanding history of migration and deep transnational ties (García Zamora & del Valle Martinez, 2017; García Zamora & Padilla, 2016). The 49 interviews center around the experiences of 9 Mexican-American children who had moved to Mexico in the three years before the date of the interview, their families, and staff from the school they attended. In this study, I draw from 14 interviews with school personnel (principals, teachers, administrative personnel) and my observations in the school. All of the participants work at the middle school level. All but one school in the sample are public. I also use information from informal conversations with school principals and teachers from Zacatecas that I did not interview formally because the Mexican-American children in their schools were not eligible for my study

[27] The rural communities are close to the cities of Zacatecas and Fresnillo, but they are small enough that their names would make my subjects identifiable. The urban communities are Guadalupe and Fresnillo.

due to the length of residency or other logistic issues. The interviews centered around the incorporation of recently arrived Mexican-American children in schools.

Measures for quantitative analysis.

Place of birth and length of residency in Mexico. The population in this study is the 26,008,808 children that are six years and over and live in Mexico and 1) were born in Mexico or 2) were born in the US and had at least one Mexican parent. The question I used to determine the place of birth was "In which state of the Mexican Republic or in which country was (NAME) born"—*¿En qué estado de la República Mexicana o en qué país nació (NOMBRE)*. The question to determine the place of residence was "In which state of the Mexican Republic or in which country did you reside in March 2010"—*¿En qué estado de la República Mexicana o en qué país vivía (NOMBRE) en marzo de 2010?"* Dividing the population by place of birth (Mexico or the US) and place of residence in 2010 (Mexico or the US) results in four groups: 1) Mexican-born children who lived in Mexico in 2010 (98.4%, n=25,592,667) 2) Mexican-born children who lived in the US in 2010 (0.1%, n=26,008) 3) Mexican-American children who lived in Mexico in 2010 (1.3%, n=338,115) and 4) Mexican-American children who lived in the US in 2010 (0.3%, n=78,026).

Outcome variable.

I use the question "Does (NAME) currently attend school"—*¿(NOMBRE) asiste actualmente a la escuela?*—to construct an indicator variable for school attendance. Though the Mexican Constitution makes school attendance mandatory from elementary school through high school, school enrollment is not universal, and it decreases at higher educational levels. As previous research on Mexican-American children in Mexico has found (Glick & Yabiku, 2016), my data shows differences in school attendance by length of residency that favors those who

have been in Mexico for a longer time. It is important to highlight that there is no data on the reason for non-attendance. This is important because children who are not enrolled in school can be a diverse population, and there can be many explanations for why they do not attend school. For example, the child does not want to attend school, the child cannot afford to attend school, the family does not want the child to attend school, or there are institutional and structural variables in the community that prevent the child from accessing education.

Operational measure of density of transnational community ties

My operational measures of community migration and transnational networks are levels of the 2010 Migration Intensity Index at the municipality level. The Index accounts for 1) the percentage of households with migrants in the US, 2) the percentage of households with circular migrants, 3) the percentage of households with return migrants, 4) the percentage of households that receives remittances. Households with return migrants are those with members who migrated to the US within the five years before the 2010 Census data collection period (May 31st to June 25th, 2010). Households with circular migrants are those with members who moved to the US between 2005-2010 and returned within the same time-frame. Households with return migrants are those with a member who was born in Mexico, was living in the US in 2005 and came back to live in Mexico by the time the INEGI collected the Census data (CONAPO, 2012). Finally, households that receive remittances are those with at least one member who receives money from abroad.

The CONAPO categorizes the 2,456 Mexican municipalities into 6 migration intensity levels: very high migration (n=178, 7.2%), high migration (n=431, 17.5%), medium migration (n=504, 20.5%), low migration (n=719, 29.3%), very low migration (n=603, 24.6%), and null migration intensity (n=11, 0.4%). As Table 8 shows, there is a higher proportion of Mexican-American children living in municipalities with higher levels of migration intensity than their

native-born counterparts. Though Mexican-Amer, can children are more likely to live in municipalities with very high migration intensity the percentages are small enough that they can create estimation problems, which is why I collapse both categories in the analysis.

Table 8. Share of children in municipalities, by the level migration intensity in the municipality

Level by place of birth / residence in 2010	Proportion	Std. Err.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Very Low/Null Migration Intensity				
MX/MX2010	0.35	0.00	0.35	0.35
MX/US2010	0.21	0.00	0.21	0.22
US/MX2010	0.09	0.00	0.09	0.09
US/US2010	0.09	0.00	0.09	0.09
All	0.35	0.00	0.35	0.35
Low Migration Intensity				
MX/MX2010	0.42	0.00	0.42	0.42
MX/US2010	0.45	0.00	0.45	0.46
US/MX2010	0.53	0.00	0.53	0.53
US/US2010	0.43	0.00	0.42	0.43
All	0.42	0.00	0.42	0.42
Medium Migration Intensity				
MX/MX2010	0.13	0.00	0.13	0.13
MX/US2010	0.18	0.00	0.17	0.18
US/MX2010	0.18	0.00	0.18	0.19
US/US2010	0.23	0.00	0.22	0.23
All	0.13	0.00	0.13	0.13
High Migration Intensity				
MX/MX2010	0.07	0.00	0.07	0.07
MX/US2010	0.12	0.00	0.11	0.12
US/MX2010	0.14	0.00	0.14	0.14
US/US2010	0.19	0.00	0.19	0.19
All	0.08	0.00	0.08	0.08
Very High Migration Intensity				
MX/MX2010	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.02
MX/US2010	0.04	0.00	0.04	0.04
US/MX2010	0.05	0.00	0.05	0.05
US/US2010	0.07	0.00	0.07	0.07
All	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.02

Control variables: gender, indigenous identity, family resources, and community characteristics

I include gender, indigenous identity, parental education, household income and structure, and social marginalization in the community. Administrative data shows that in Mexico, females have higher school enrollment rates than males in elementary, middle, and high school levels (*Instituto National de Investigación Educativa*, 2015). To account for this, I include a dichotomous variable that takes a value of 1 to indicate if the child is female. As Table 9 shows, the gender distribution is similar across populations.

In Mexico, indigenous communities face considerable socioeconomic disadvantages and discrimination, which negatively impacts their access to education and school attainment (Mier y Terán-Rocha & Rabell-Romero, 2003). To account for this, I include a dichotomous measure that indicates if the child is indigenous. To determine if the child is indigenous, I used the question "According to her culture, (NAME) considers herself indigenous" *—De acuerdo con su cultura, ¿(NOMBRE) se considera indígena?."* Table 9 shows differences in the indigenous composition of children populations by place of birth. This difference may be associated with differences in identity or with the composition of Mexican migration flows, although data suggest that the share of indigenous migrants has increased since the late 1980's (Durand, 2016).

Consistent evidence from the Mexican context shows that parental education is a strong determinant of educational outcomes and access to education (Bentaouet Kattan & Székely, 2015; Solís, 2013). I account for mother's years of schooling and father's years of schooling as measures of human-cultural capital in the family. Mexican-American children are the population whose mothers (10.3 years) and fathers (9.9 years) have the most average years of

schooling. In contrast, Mexican-American children who have lived in Mexico for less time have the fathers with the fewest average years of schooling (8.7 years).

I included measures of the family given previous evidence on the connection between family structure and school enrollment among Mexican and Mexican-American children in Mexico (CONEVAL, 2014; Glick & Yabiku, 2016). My measures of family structure are indicators that account for nuclear household and female-headed households. The data shows that the proportion of children in female-headed households is slightly more significant among Mexican-American children than among the native-born. Mexican-American children who have lived in Mexico for less time are marginally more likely to live in female-headed households. Mexican-American children are also more likely to live in nuclear households (about 75%) than their native-born counterparts who have been in Mexico for longer (70%).

To account for financial resources in the household I include a standardized measure of the family's income based on the minimum wage and its variations across Mexican regions[28]. My measure of household income is:

$$HHincome_h = \frac{HMI_h}{MW_{mun}}$$

Where HMI_h is the monthly household income in pesos and MW_{mun} is the minimum wage in the municipality[29]. This measure allows me to adjust for variations in income due to minimum wage differences across municipalities. On average, Mexican-American children who have lived in Mexico for longer live in the wealthiest households (6.1 min. wages), while Mexican-born children who have lived in Mexico since at least 2010 live in the households with lower average household monthly income (4.6 min wages). Concerning remittances, the

[28] Because Mexico has regulations on minimum wage that the Mexican Government determines by geographical regions, the minimum wage varies across municipalities

[29] This information is available in the 2015 Intercensal Survey dataset

difference is stark: a considerably larger proportion of Mexican-American children live in households that receive remittances (14% if they are longtime residents and 24% if they arrived after 2010) than their long-time resident native-born counterparts (4%).

I account for rural locations due to significant rural/urban differences in access to education in the Mexican context (Bentaouet Kattan & Székely, 2015; Ezpeleta & Weiss, 1996; Mier y Terán-Rocha & Rabell-Romero, 2003; Santos del Real & Carvajal-Cantillo, 2001). To account for rural locations, I include an indicator variable that signals if the child lives in a rural locality with less than 2,500 inhabitants. This is the definition of rural used by the INEGI (2010). A smaller proportion of long-term resident Mexican-American children lives in rural areas (24%) than their native-born counterparts (26%). In contrast, about 31% of the more recently arrived Mexican-American children live in rural areas—they are the group with the highest proportion of children living in such areas. The length of residency difference in the portion of Mexican-American children living in rural areas is consistent with the evidence of an increase in return migration flows to rural areas between 2009 and 2014 (Gandini, Lozano-Ascencio & Gaspar Olvera, 2015).

I account for social marginalization in the community because it is a proxy for the available social and economic resources in the area, which is connected to educational opportunities available in the area (Bentaouet Kattan & Székely, 2015). To account for this, I use indicators of the level of 2015 Marginalization Index at the municipal level. The index uses the following variables: 1) percent of the population 15 years and older who cannot read or write, 2) percent of the population 15 years and older with incomplete elementary school education, 3) percent of inhabitants in dwellings without a drain or toilet, 4) percent of inhabitants in dwellings without access to running water, 5) percent of inhabitants in dwellings

without access to electric power, 6) percent of dwellings with overcrowding[30], 7) percent of inhabitants in dwellings with a dirt floor, 8) percent of the population in localities with less than 5,000 inhabitants, 9) percent of occupied population with an income below two minimum wages (CONAPO, 2016). Table 9 suggests that, unlike in the case of migration intensity, there is no clear pattern in the Marginalization levels of the places where Mexican-American children live.

Table 9. Descriptive statistics of control variables.

Continuous variables	**Mean**	**Std. Err.**	**[95% Conf. Interval]**	
Mother's years of schooling				
MX/MX2010	8.82	0.00	8.82	8.82
MX/US2010	9.54	0.03	9.48	9.59
US/MX2010	10.27	0.01	10.25	10.29
US/US2010	9.42	0.02	9.38	9.45
All	8.84	0.00	8.84	8.84
Father's years of schooling				
MX/MX2010	9.01	0.00	9.01	9.02
MX/US2010	9.47	0.03	9.41	9.53
US/MX2010	9.92	0.01	9.90	9.94
US/US2010	8.66	0.02	8.63	8.70
All	9.03	0.00	9.02	9.03
HH Income (min. wages)				
MX/MX2010	4.64	0.00	4.64	4.64
MX/US2010	5.43	0.05	5.34	5.53
US/MX2010	6.13	0.02	6.09	6.17
US/US2010	4.85	0.03	4.78	4.91
All	4.66	0.00	4.66	4.66
Categorical variables	**Proportion**	**Std. Err.**	**[95% Conf. Interval]**	
Female				
MX/MX2010	0.49	0.00	0.49	0.49
MX/US2010	0.51	0.00	0.51	0.52
US/MX2010	0.5	0.00	0.49	0.50
US/US2010	0.5	0.00	0.49	0.50
All	0.49	0.00	0.49	0.49

[30] Defined as "one room destined for sleeping with three or more occupants' or "two rooms destined for sleeping with five or more occupants" (CONAPO, 2015).

Indigenous				
MX/MX2010	0.24	0.00	0.24	0.24
MX/US2010	0.14	0.00	0.14	0.14
US/MX2010	0.11	0.00	0.11	0.12
US/US2010	0.14	0.00	0.14	0.14
All	0.24	0.00	0.23	0.24
Female headed household				
MX/MX2010	0.24	0.00	0.24	0.24
MX/US2010	0.27	0.00	0.27	0.28
US/MX2010	0.27	0.00	0.27	0.27
US/US2010	0.28	0.00	0.28	0.29
All	0.24	0.00	0.24	0.24
Nuclear household				
MX/MX2010	0.7	0.00	0.70	0.70
MX/US2010	0.73	0.00	0.73	0.74
US/MX2010	0.75	0.00	0.74	0.75
US/US2010	0.74	0.00	0.74	0.74
All	0.7	0.00	0.70	0.70
Remittances				
MX/MX2010	0.04	0.00	0.04	0.04
MX/US2010	0.14	0.00	0.14	0.14
US/MX2010	0.14	0.00	0.14	0.14
US/US2010	0.24	0.00	0.23	0.24
All	0.04	0.00	0.04	0.04
	Community characteristics			
Categorical variables	**Proportion**	**Std. Err.**	**[95% Conf. Interval]**	
Rural Location				
MX/MX2010	0.26	0.00	0.26	0.26
MX/US2010	0.25	0.00	0.24	0.25
US/MX2010	0.24	0.00	0.24	0.24
US/US2010	0.31	0.00	0.31	0.31
All	0.26	0.00	0.26	0.26
Very Low Marginality				
MX/MX2010	0.56	0.00	0.56	0.56
MX/US2010	0.59	0.00	0.58	0.59
US/MX2010	0.63	0.00	0.63	0.63
US/US2010	0.49	0.00	0.49	0.50
All	0.56	0.00	0.56	0.56
Low Marginality				
MX/MX2010	0.17	0.00	0.17	0.17
MX/US2010	0.19	0.00	0.19	0.20
US/MX2010	0.18	0.00	0.18	0.19
US/US2010	0.22	0.00	0.22	0.23
All	0.17	0.00	0.17	0.17

Medium Marginality				
MX/MX2010	0.11	0.00	0.11	0.11
MX/US2010	0.13	0.00	0.12	0.13
US/MX2010	0.11	0.00	0.11	0.11
US/US2010	0.15	0.00	0.15	0.15
All	0.11	0.00	0.11	0.11
High Marginality				
MX/MX2010	0.11	0.00	0.11	0.12
MX/US2010	0.08	0.00	0.08	0.08
US/MX2010	0.07	0.00	0.07	0.07
US/US2010	0.11	0.00	0.11	0.12
All	0.11	0.00	0.11	0.11
Very High Marginality				
MX/MX2010	0.05	0.00	0.05	0.05
MX/US2010	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
US/MX2010	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
US/US2010	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.02
All	0.05	0.00	0.05	0.05

Methods

I use descriptive logit models to describe the association between school attendance and the variables I use to operationalize transnational ties at the community level. I use logit models because my outcome variable is binary—either the child attends school, or she does not. To fit my models, I used the expansion factor included in the 2015 Intercensal Survey (INEGI, 2015) to expand my dataset to represent the Mexican children population. The expanded dataset has 26,008,808 observations. I expanded the dataset to avoid complications from the sampling design of the survey, which is based on the size and socioeconomic characteristic of localities (a subunit of municipalities), but it is not stratified by state or municipality (INEGI, 2015). Because the size of the dataset created numerical overflow errors in Stata, I sampled 10% of the population of Mexican children who lived in Mexico in 2010. I kept all the observations for the other populations. This new dataset that I use to run my logistic models has 10% of the original

sample of Mexican children born in Mexico and lived in Mexico in 2010 and the totality of the observations of the other populations. In total, the dataset has 2,984,260 observations[31].

I estimate my models by age groups that correspond to educational levels. I do this to account for age-related differences in factors that shape school attendance and transitions. I use the criteria of the Mexican Secretary of Public Education: elementary school: 6 to 11 years old; middle school: 12 to 14 years old; high school: 15 to 17 years old. I use medium intensity as the base category for migration intensity in the municipality, and medium marginalization as the reference for social marginalization in the community. I present my results in odd-ratios (OR) to aid interpretation.

I use state indicator variables as a fixed-effects approach to account for potential unobserved effects associated with state-level policy differences (StataCorp, 2017; Pforr, 2014; Wong & Mason, 1985). The Mexican public education system is complex. There are federal guidelines, but there are state-based educational systems in what is equivalent to middle school—though all of them are recognized as middle-school education. Some of these systems vary across states. In addition, there are differences across states in terms of resources for schooling at all levels, as a part of the budget for education comes from state-level resources (see INEE, 2017).

[31] Due to the nature and size of my dataset, Stata could not handle fixed effects logits nor fixed effects logistic models due to numeric overflow problems (*xtlogit, fe* and *clogit*). Thus, a logit model with indicators was the best choice.

What is the connection between the density of transnational connections in Mexican communities and the likelihood of school enrollment of Mexican-American children in Mexico?

The results presented in Table 10 show that besides socioeconomic characteristic of families, the density of transnational networks in a community is connected to school attendance among Mexican-American children. In general terms, there is some evidence that place of birth (US) and length of residency in Mexico influence the likelihood of school attendance, and that children who have been in the country for less time are at a disadvantage. My models suggest that living in areas with dense transnational connections is advantageous for school attendance among Mexican-American children who arrived in relatively recent years—in this case, after 2010. My data shows that the association between the density of transnational networks and school attendance changes across age groups, which points to the fact that the salience of networks in a community change can vary across educational levels. Like previous studies (Glick & Yabiku, 2016), my results show that family characteristics are a crucial element of school enrollment among Mexican-American children in Mexico--regardless of their age group[32]. This was an expected finding, as socioeconomic conditions are essential for children's opportunities.

[32]Unlike previous work, I estimated the effects of family characteristics on school attendance of Mexican-American children in a separate set of models for that population. I do not include said estimations in this paper.

Table 10. Mexican-American children and school enrollments by density of transnational networks in the community (by age group).

	6 to 11	12 to 14	15 to 17
Currently attends school (Yes)			
Female	1.116***	1.173***	1.409***
	-6.816	-11.54	-40.13
Indigenous	1.057**	1.073***	0.998
	-2.627	-3.977	(-0.198)
US born	0.681***	0.957	0.942
	(-5.184)	(-0.432)	(-0.948)
Lived in the US(2010)	0.650***	0.742***	0.867***
	(-5.542)	(-5.162)	(-3.718)
Mother's years of schooling	1.110***	1.158***	1.144***
	-36.4	-62.37	-93.59
Father's years of schooling	1.081***	1.121***	1.131***
	-29.15	-51.3	-91.52
Income (in min wages)	0.995***	0.991***	0.989***
	(-7.308)	(-13.12)	(-8.385)
Female headed household	0.933**	0.895***	0.978
	(-2.764)	(-4.996)	(-1.624)
Nuclear household	1.300***	1.334***	1.525***
	-14.12	-18.48	-43.76
Rural locality	1.087***	0.953**	0.839***
	-3.921	(-2.751)	(-15.62)
Migration intensity in municipality			
Low	0.99	0.875***	0.914***
	(-0.372)	(-5.850)	(-6.526)
Medium	1.159***	0.847***	0.884***
	-4.18	(-5.815)	(-6.777)
High/V.High	1.194***	0.868***	0.835***
	-4.047	(-4.144)	(-8.530)
Interactions			
US born/US 2010	0.866	0.997	0.245***
	(-0.901)	(-0.00988)	(-8.206)
US born/Low migration	1.440***	1.800***	1.358***
	-4.382	-5.255	-4.389
US born/Medium migration	1.924***	1.548***	1.345***
	-6.328	-3.679	-3.841
US born/High migration	1.584***	1.487**	1.262**
	-4.305	-3.29	-2.985
US born/V.high migration	2.011***	1.697***	1.503***
	-4.718	-3.603	-4.178
US born/US 2010/Low migration	0.818	0.361***	2.649***
	(-1.318)	(-3.763)	-5.325
US born/US 2010/Medium migration	1.497*	1.13	2.137***
	-2.07	-0.415	-3.771
US born/US 2010/High/V.high migration	1.345	1.078	3.637***
	-1.589	-0.259	-6.506
Constant	13.79***	1.781***	0.259***
	-27.43	-9.018	(-34.06)
State FE.	YES	YES	YES
Observations	947,603	462,123	390,887
Wald chi	6463	18644	46005
DOF	55	55	55
Prob >chi2	0	0	0

Children 6 to 11 years old

Net of everything else, being born in the US and having moved to Mexico in recent years has a negative association with school attendance. However, the evidence suggests that the density of transnational networks in the community can have a substantial positive effect on school attendance among Mexican-American children once everything else has been taken account for. Overall, my results show that a higher density in the transnational networks in the community has a positive effect on school attendance for all children in this age group. As3 shows, the OR for medium and high/very high migration intensity in the municipality are larger than 1 and statistically significant. An OR larger than one means that their likelihood of attending school is larger than the likelihood of children in the baseline category.

Once everything else has been accounted for, compared to their peers in municipalities with very low migration intensity—my proxy for the density of transnational networks in the community— Mexican-American children living in municipalities with low migration intensity are about 44% times more likely to attend school; those in municipalities with medium migration are about 92% more likely to attend school; and those in municipalities with high migration are about 58% more likely, and those in areas with very high migration intensity are nearly twice as likely to attend school. There is an additional 50% of the likelihood of attending school for Mexican-American children who arrived after 2010 if they live in municipalities with medium migration intensity. Overall, net of everything else the effect of the density of transnational networks on school attendance among Mexican-American children offset the adverse effects of place of birth and length of residency for children in municipalities with medium, high, and very high migration. This is because of the sum of the OR of the coefficients of those migration intensity levels and their interactions with the place of birth yield a value larger than the decrease of the place of birth and length of residency.

Children 12 to 14 years old

For this age group, there is no evidence that—net of everything else—being born in the US presents a disadvantage. However, the data suggest that when everything else has been accounted for, those who lived in the US in 2010 are about 25% less likely to attend school. For all children in this age group, migration intensity in the community is connected to a lower likelihood of attending school. This is consistent with the evidence that parental migration can disrupt the environment of children and create behavioral issues among teenagers, or that the normalization of migration in the community can make moving to the US a valid alternative in the minds of teenagers (Kandel & Kao, 2001). There is some evidence that living in areas with higher migration intensity has a positive effect on US-born children's school attendance.

Once all else has been considered, compared with their peers in the baseline category, Mexican-American children are about 80% more likely to go to school if they live in areas with low migration intensity ($p<0.001$); 55% if they live in municipalities with medium migration intensity ($p<0.001$); 49% in municipalities with high migration ($p<0.01$); and about 70% more likely if they live in areas with very high migration intensity ($p<0.001$). This suggests that having at least some moderately high transnational connections in the community benefits Mexican-American middle-school-aged children. However, the results presented in Table 10 show that the density of transnational networks in the community does not have an additional effect for children in this age group. The only statistically significant OR of the density of networks in the municipality is the interaction between US-born, US residence in 2010, and low migration in the municipality, and it has a negative effect on the outcome variable (0.36, $p<0.001$). This means that for newly arrived Mexican-American children aged 12 to 14, compared to their peers in areas with very low migration intensity, the advantage of living in

areas with low migration intensity decreases. The effect goes from being 80% more likely to be 54% more likely to attend school than children in the baseline category.

Children 15 to 17 years old

As the data shows, differences in school enrollment rates among this age group are stark. On the one hand, Mexican-American children with a lengthier residence are the group with the highest school enrollment rates—they surpass their native-born peers. On the other hand, recently arrived Mexican-Americans are the group with lowest school attendance rates at this stage. My models suggest that, by itself, the place of birth does not influence the likelihood of school attendance of Mexican-American in this age group. For all teenagers, having lived in the US in 2010 decreases their probability of attending school by about 13%. This disadvantage is more severe for Mexican-American children who were still in the US in 2010. Net of everything else, the OR (0.245, $p<0.001$) of the interaction of place of birth and place of residence shows that Mexican-American children who arrived more recently to Mexico are about 75% less likely to attend school.

Interestingly, this was the only age group in which the level of migration intensity in the municipality seemed to have a direct connection to school enrollment rates: the higher the intensity, the lower the rate of school attendance for all individuals. As Table 10 shows, the ORs of the indicators of migration intensity in the community are all smaller than one, with values that decrease with higher intensity levels. However, as the ORs of the interactions show, there is an increase in the likelihood of school attendance for Mexican-American children in areas with more dense transnational connections. Compared to their counterparts in municipalities with the least dense transnational networks, those in areas with more ties are more likely to be in school. Mexican-American children are about 36% more likely to attend school if they live in municipalities with low migration intensity; 35% if they live in municipalities with medium

migration intensity; 26% in high migration intensity; and 50% more likely to attend school in they live in areas with very high migration intensity.

On top of that, denser transnational community networks have an additional benefit for recently arrived Mexican-Americans. Among these newer residents, compared to those in municipalities with very low migration intensity, living in areas with low migration intensity increases their chances of attending school by 265%; in regions with medium intensity, by 214%; and in areas with high or very high migration intensity by about 364%. These effects are all statistically significant ($p<0.001$).

Social support, normalization, and institutionalization of resources in Mexican communities with dense migration networks.

The connection between a higher density of transnational community networks and a higher probability of school enrollment among Mexican-American children can be explained by three primary mechanisms: social support, normalization, and the institutionalization of resources in schools. One of my main findings is that social support and normalization are deeply connected, and that adults and children are more likely to support Mexican-American children when these children are considered as part of the community. One of my most relevant findings is that institutional agents—non-kin individuals in high-status positions and who can provide institutional support (Stanton-Salazar, 2011)—can make a positive impact on the school experiences of Mexican-American children. Principals influence the conduct of the entire and teachers. Principals can implement school policies that favor the inclusion of Mexican-American children. This means that, at the very local level, some schools have clear guidelines and procedures designed to help these students.

Table 11. Social support, normalization, and institutionalization of resources in schools and communities.

Location	Community helps children's incorporation	Mechanisms.	School sample	School aids with school enrollment.	Mechanisms	Summary.
1. Urban community, middle income, high migration.	Yes.	Normalization.	Public school School principal (Ignacio), social worker (Carmela), English teacher (Juan), administrative staff*.	Yes.	Social support, normalization, institutionalization of resources.	Ignacio is very sympathetic with Mexican-American children. Two of his grandsons were born in the US. A few years ago his grandchildren struggled to enroll in Mexican schools because school staff was not familiar with how to register these children (the procedure has changed since). He learned from his family's negative experiences. He instructed school staff to pay attention and to keep detailed records of Mexican-American children. School staff is very familiar with the issues these children have with documents. Carmela notes that all but one of the 14 Mexican-American children in the 900-student school came to Mexico before they started school. She mentions that Mexican-American children in the school have the most active parents.
			Private school Principal (Evangelina).	Yes.	Normalization.	Private schools can afford to invest additional resources in Mexican-American children. They have fewer students per teacher so that teachers can spend more time with each student. Students speak English, and some have family ties with the US. Middle-class children in the school travel to the US and consume US media (cultural rapprochement). Mexican-American children in this school adapt quickly.

Table 11 (Cont.). Social support, normalization, and institutionalization of resources in schools and communities.

Location	Community helps children's incorporation	Mechanisms.	School sample	School aids with school enrollment.	Mechanisms	Summary.
2. Rural low-income community with high migration.	No.	Discrimination (Bullying at school. However, it seems that the poverty and crime in the community create the environment and that Mexican-American children are not the only victims)	Public school. Principal (Ignacio)*, vice principal (Ramiro) , English teacher (Ernesto), prefect (Julián).	No.	Lack of social support, discrimination .	The principal was not very sympathetic towards Mexican-American children who came to Mexico without all their documentation and who were not proficient in Spanish. Principal and vice principal mentioned that public schools do not have resources to help those children. Principal expressed resentment towards educational authorities that "send American children and put all the burden in schools" but do not give them resources. Ernesto is the English teacher. In his youth, he migrated to the US. He feels sympathy towards Mexican-American children. He said that in the US he struggled with the language, so he understands why these children can be frustrated. Ernesto notes that he has an intermediate English level and that most English teachers in Mexico have poor language skills. He understands why Mexican-American children get frustrated at school. He says he also understands why some teachers dislike Mexican-Americans, who can be too rebellious and individualistic. Ernesto has Mexican-American nieces and nephews.

*Informal conversation

Table 11 (Cont.). Social support, normalization, and institutionalization of resources in schools and communities.

Location	Community helps children's incorporation	Mechanisms.	School sample	School aids with school enrollment.	Mechanisms	Summary.
3. Urban middle-income community, medium migration	No.	Discrimination. No social support.	Public school. Principal (Rebeca), prefect (Armando), science teacher (Felipe)	No.	Lack of social support from administrative staff (principal), discrimination.	Principal, prefect, and teacher come from middle-class backgrounds and do not have migrants in their family. The principal is a strict woman who has prejudices against "Americans." Rebeca also notes that schools do not have the resources to help these children who "come from troubled backgrounds." The prefect (Armando) is sympathetic to Mexican-American children who arrive "all grown up." Armando mentioned that over the years he had met several Mexican-American children who return with their parents. He notes he is familiar with their struggles and that he does his best to help them. Armando mentioned that he has seen that many Mexican-American children come from broken homes and that moving to Mexico can frustrate them. He worries that drug cartels will try to recruit them because of their language skills and because they can go back and forth across the border. Felipe has met a few Mexican-American students. He mentions that Mexican-American children come with a solid science background. He has a positive attitude towards them because they have creative ideas and they get involved in class.

*Informal conversation

Table 11 (Cont.). Social support, normalization, and institutionalization of resources in schools and communities.

Location	Community helps children's incorporation	Mechanisms.	School sample	School aids with school enrollment.	Mechanisms	Summary.
4. Semi-urban community, medium income, high migration	Yes.	Normalization. Social support.	Public school Principal (Laila), English teacher (Gabriela), social worker (Perla)	Yes.	Social support, normalization, institutionalization of resources.	Laila is a former English teacher. She comes from a middle-class background, and she says she is lucky that no one in her family has been forced to migrate. Laila is aware of the plights of Mexican-American children. She also emphasizes that Mexican public schools do not have the resources to help them. Laila mentioned that many Mexican-American children that have come and gone in her school, so she already knows how to deal with the paperwork and placement. Gabriela is a Mexican-American woman in her mid-20s who moved to Mexico when she was 15. She says that when she arrived children at her school asked her many questions because they were curious about the US. Gabriela did not encounter discrimination. However, she struggled with school due to language skills. She says that she struggled to adapt to life in Mexico even though her family and other children at school welcomed. Perla believes that Mexican-American children are at high risk of being recruited by drug cartels, and she tries to be especially vigilant. She believes that these children struggle a lot to incorporate and that many of them come from dysfunctional families, which is why she needs to be supportive.

*Informal conversation

Table 11 (Cont.). Social support, normalization, and institutionalization of resources in schools and communities.

Location	Community helps children's incorporation	Mechanisms.	School sample	School aids with school enrollment.	Mechanisms	Summary.
5. Semi-urban, low-income community, high migration.	Yes.	Normalization.	Public school Principal (German*), Vice-principal (Diego).	Yes.	Social support, Normalization.	Principal and vice principal are sympathetic to return migrants and their children. The principal is supportive of Mexican-American children, but he emphasized that "they struggle to help them because they do not know how to teach them." He feels that Mexican educational authorities neglect these children and put all the burden on principals, who are already stressed due to scarce resources. He notes that in public discourse, politicians and government officials claim to care about these children, but that those are just words. Diego, the vice principal, mentions the school has had several Mexican-American children over the years and that the staff does their best to help them. He says other children in the community are used to them because Mexican-American children often visit during the summer. He believes there is instability in Mexican-American children's educational trajectories. He repeated the concerns about resources to help these children.

*Informal conversation

In communities with important transnational connections, principals and school staff are more likely to be familiar with Mexican-American children. Sometimes this familiarity comes from personal relationships. Other times, familiarity comes through interactions. For example, principals and teachers in areas with strong transnational networks report having many Mexican-American students over the years, which is why they know how to help them with bureaucratic procedures and with incorporating at school. Table 11 presents a detailed description of the connection between the characteristics of the community and the school and the mechanisms behind school enrollment and educational experiences of Mexican-American children in Mexico.

Social support and normalization

Social support and normalization are deeply connected. In communities with more dense transnational networks, Mexican-American children are less likely to be singled out, and they were more likely to be embraced by the community. In communities with denser transnational networks, principals and teachers were more likely to have migration experience or to have friends or relatives with US-born children.

Also, school staff expressed that the native-born children are used to Mexican-Americans because they often have cousins or friends who were born in the US. Several interviewees mentioned that it is frequent for Mexican-American children to visit the community during the holidays or for the *fiesta de pueblo*—the town's most prominent celebration, which is an important social event for the community. Several of the interviewees were explicit about how their migration experience shaped their warm feelings towards Mexican-American students. Others brought up their family ties as the reason why they are sympathetic towards these children, and why they view them as part of the community. As a result, Mexican-American children are not considered as strangers in schools and communities

with strong transnational connections. For example, Ernesto—an English teacher in a rural community with strong transnational connections—saw his own migration experience reflected in Mexican-American children. He felt the struggles of moving to a place that is not your own, and how hard it is to overcome language barriers. Ernesto has Mexican-American nephews and nieces who have been in Mexico, and he sees how much they struggle with Spanish and how labor conditions in the US shape the language skills of Mexican-American children in the US. We sat in the "teachers corner"—a roundat the far end of the large room that serves as the "school office" where the rest of the administrative staff works. He is a tall, strong man dressed fully dressed in denim. With a gentle voice, he recalled his experiences and told me about his family.

"Yo tengo muchos sobrinos americanos, nacidos allá. Y llegan aquí…"y esto?", o sea también los papás no dicen, e incluso si usted se fija, las familias allá... solamente trabajan los papás, ellos encerrados. Entonces qué pueden aprender si ni siquiera hacen convivencia con los vecinos…"

"I have many American nieces and nephews born in the US. And they come here…"What is up with this?" and I mean, their parents do not say, and even if you pay attention, families there... parents are only working, they (the children) are locked up. So what can they learn if they are not even spending time with their neighbors".

Ernesto made sure that Mexican-American children in the school—particularly those who struggled the most due to the deportation of their parents—felt welcomed because he understood the social environment and the living conditions of these children through his own experience and the experiences of his kin.

Carmelo, the school principal in an urban public school in an area with strong transnational connections, is the grandfather of two Mexican-American children who moved to

Mexico in their late teens. He is in his late 60s, and he is about to retire. He is familiar with the difficulties that Mexican-American children face, so he goes out of his way to help his students. He believes that members of the community know about his attitudes towards these children. That is why--he believes--people tell parents of recently arrived Mexican-American students about his school. 14 out of the 15 middle school students registered in the PROBEM (in the 100,000-inhabitants city) were enrolled in his school. He believes that his school has earned a reputation in the community for helping these students and that parents of Mexican-American children hear about him through word of mouth. He says that migration is so prevalent in his city that people “know how things work." Migration and deportation are frequent in the lives of people, which is why he is so understanding.

In contrast, Rebeca and Armando—the principal and the prefect of a public middle school in a middle-income area with less transnational connections—were not as familiar with the situation of these children. Rebeca, a light-skinned woman in her 50s, comes from a comfortable middle-class background. She has no migrant relatives, and she has strong Anti-American beliefs. Rebeca considers that "American” children are rude and lazy. She openly says she would prefer not to deal with any of them. Rebeca does not view Mexican-American kids as “real Mexicans.” Armando—a young man in his early 30s— also from a solidly middle-class background. He went to private schools all his life. He cannot relate to the experiences of deportees or return migrants, but he tries his best to be understanding. He cares about Mexican-American children because he has witnessed ho discrimination affects them. However, he acknowledges that as much as he cares, he does not always know how to help Mexican-American children. He speaks English, so he can at least communicate with them. However, Rebeca has more power. Her vision prevails at school.

The evidence suggests that teachers and staff in contexts with critical transnational networks may be more understanding with Mexican-American children. This understanding has profound effects on their attitudes towards these children. Though not every interviewee who was determined to help Mexican-American children is motivated personal connections, those with migration experience and migrant kin were better equipped to help Mexican-American children. Furthermore, in areas with dense transnational connections, communities were more open towards Mexican-American children. This openness has profound implications on how native-born kids incorporate the new arrivals.

Institutionalization of resources

Overall, I found no evidence of changes in the provision of public education that is connected to the presence of Mexican-American children in Zacatecas, even though there is a program established by the Mexican government and some US states that aims to help migrant children access education (Binational Program for Migrant Students, PROBEM). This program was a response to the growing concern about access to education among migrant children. I will not discuss the program in detail, but it establishes a "Transfer Document" that eases the difficulties of school enrollment. The PROBEM also contemplates Mexican teachers traveling to the US during the summer to teach Mexican children about their national identity, and--in theory-- it seeks to help the development of cultural and pedagogical tools to help migrant children integrate at school. However, it seems that the only practical real implication is that Mexican-American students are registered in a dataset.

To make matters worse, my research points to the fact that—at least in Zacatecas—the PROBEM does not reach Mexican-American children who arrived in recent years, and that most of the children registered were born in the US but were raised in Mexico. Additionally, it seems that principals and parents who were most informed about the PROBEM were in urban lower-

middle class settings. In sum, the PROBEM does not provide resources for Mexican-American students to learn Spanish, and there is no mention of social support. The PROBEM does not give Mexican schools additional resources to incorporate these children.

Several principals and teachers expressed their concern about the lack of resources destined to help Mexican-American students, and they consider that these children strain their already pressed teachers. Principals mentioned that politicians and high ranking officials say a lot of empty words about their efforts to help Mexican-American children. When it comes to actions, principals and teachers claim the government leaves them to their luck. Principals complain that public school teachers have large groups and recently arrived Mexican-American children require lots of help to gain language skills. Principals were clear: teachers cannot neglect the classroom to devote their attention to the needs of one particular student. In sum: even when there is an institutionalized resource to help a population access public services, there is no guarantee that it will have positive results on the most vulnerable members of the group. In this case, recently arrived students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Some of the principals that were aware of the struggles of Mexican-American children established clear courses of action in their schools. For example, Carmelo keeps a detailed record of these children because he wants to make sure they do not face bureaucratic obstacles. In addition, the administrative staff at his school helps parents understand all the bureaucratic procedures to enroll their children. The administrative team at the school has lots of experience the process to register these children, and they know how to bypass bureaucratic obstacles—how to fill the forms, who to call if there is a problem, what other resources can help them help children get all their documents in order. The administrative staff in this school has so much experience that they jokingly say they can do all the paperwork with their eyes closed.

Laila is the principal of a school in a semi-urban area defined by migration. Laila comes from a middle-class background. Neither Laila nor members of her family have migration experience. She was an English teacher for over 20 years before she became principal, and can talk to Mexican-American children who do not speak Spanish. I believe that Laila's conversations with Mexican-American children over the years explain her positive attitude towards them. Unless circumstances are extraordinary, she does not send students a grade back due to language limitations. Laila believes that frustrates them and leads them to drop out. Teachers in the school agree. Several of them have encountered Mexican-American children in the past, so they have some knowledge of how to approach them. Laila also instructed the staff at the school to be flexible and understanding with the parents of Mexican-American children. The staff has enough experience with bureaucratic procedures that they can give parents information on how to get citizenship for their children without going through the hassle that some bureaucrats impose[33].

The evidence suggests that resources for school enrollment and guidelines to incorporate Mexican American children can become institutionalized in schools. Agents concerned about the situation of Mexican-American children can trigger this institutionalization. Besides, repetition increases institutionalization: if schools have Mexican-American children the staff eventually develops the knowledge to help them.

[33] In paper, Mexican bureaucratic procedures are straightforward. In practice, parents inadequate cultural capital struggle with bureaucracy.

Conclusion

Transnational connections in sending communities shape the incorporation of the foreign-born children of return migrants. Net of family socioeconomic characteristics, Mexican-American children who live in Mexican municipalities with more dense transnational connections are more likely to be enrolled in school. The relationship between the density of transnational networks in the community and school enrollment is stronger for those who have been living in Mexico for less time. An explanation for this is that the transnational connections in the community become less salient because with time Mexican-American children incorporate.

I argue that transnational networks are an important part of school attendance—and school experiences—of Mexican-American children in Mexico. I argue that these networks influence school attendance of Mexican-American children through three main mechanisms: social support, normalization, and the institutionalization of resources. To put it bluntly: in areas with more migration connections more people are likely to be familiar with Mexican-American children, which means they are less likely to be considered strangers. The closeness of Mexican-American children to the community influences the warmth of the feelings of people towards them. In addition, schools in areas that have more Mexican-American children may be better equipped to enroll them and to help them incorporate into their new home. The negative side of the story is that communities and schools may be neglecting Mexican-American children in areas with less transnational connections. This means that Mexican-American children in places where migration is not frequent should be approached as a vulnerable population.

To better understand school attendance and the school experiences of Mexican-American children we need to explore the roles of gender, class, and skin-tone—which is the closest thing to how race is viewed in the Mexican context (Telles, 2014). Future research also

should explore the experiences of Mexican-American children in these areas to understand why they are at a disadvantage concerning school enrollment. Mexican and US policymakers need to address the schooling of Mexican-American children in Mexico as a binational policy issue. Though these children may live in Mexico for a few years, many of them will likely return to the US and join the ranks of its labor force.

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CONCLUSIONS

As the three papers of this dissertation show, return migration often has a family component, and the foreign-born children of return migrants struggle to incorporate in their ancestral homeland. The first paper of this dissertation shows that, given adverse economic conditions in the country of destination, some working-age migrants may be forced to return to their country of birth with their children. The second paper of this dissertation establishes that transnational practices and identities before relocation shape the—generally traumatic—incorporation process of children, and that families and friends are fundamental to helping these young new arrivals feel at home. The third paper of this dissertation shows how community-level networks play a crucial role, by normalizing foreign-born children, increasing social support, and even promoting the institutionalization of resources to aid children and families in settling successfully.

More broadly, this dissertation investigates what happens to Mexican American children who move to Mexico. This research contributes to the literature of the sociology of immigration and transnationalism by furthering our understanding of how transnational identities, practices and networks affect the incorporation process of the foreign-born children of return migrants. By looking at the connection between transnationalism and these children, I set myself apart from prior work on immigrant incorporation, and I look at a group that does not fit into the traditional category of immigrant. I depart from the vast majority of studies on incorporation because I include transnationalism as a resource. In contrast with prior work that investigates how transnational networks aid integration in the country of destination, I study the role of transnational networks in the communities of ancestry.

My results have important policy implications. The first is that they highlight the fact that return migration has a family component. When working-age migrants return, they may do

so with their foreign-born children. These children need access to public services. When conditions in the country of destination become adverse, governments from sending countries should be vigilant to the possibility of an increase in the numbers of foreign-born children who come with their parents. Thus, governments must consider the needs of foreign-born children as part of policies aimed to help returnees settle in. Like prior work, my results show that ethnic identity does not immediately grant membership in their community of ancestry. Foreign-born children encounter high cultural and linguistic expectations from the native-born population, and they face a harsh backlash when they fail to meet those expectations.

In my study, children who were exposed to Mexican culture during their lives in the US, who had more contact with their extended family, and who viewed Mexican identity as something positive better adapted to their lives in Mexico. Some were genuinely happy to be near their kin and were doing quite well: they had a new group of friends, and they enjoyed school. However, it is essential to note that their process of incorporation was by no means a smooth one, as relocation can be traumatic, and most children had no say in the family move. Children who do not have a strong support network and who are not habituated to Mexican culture—including Spanish proficiency—tend to feel isolated and have problems at schools. My interviews and informal conversations with school staff painted a bleak picture of vulnerable Mexican-American adolescents dropping out of schools, using drugs, and becoming involved with drug cartels. It is important to state that I could not recruit children in this last group, and I only heard about their experiences through third parties.

Like prior research, I found that one of the main obstacles that Mexican-American children encounter is that the Mexican school system does not have options for those who were not schooled in Spanish. To date, there are no resources in public schools similar to ESL programs in the US to help Mexican-American children learn Spanish, overcome the trauma of

relocation, and catch up on Mexico-related academic knowledge. Most Mexican-American children and their families expressed their frustration and their uphill battle to get empathy from the school. One of the most interesting observations was that, in the absence of institutional resources, cousins become a crucial figure: they help children master the language, learn school materials, and understand cultural norms. In other words, in the absence of public resources, kin take over the burden to help children incorporate in schools.

Mexican public schools do not have the appropriate resources to provide Mexican-American children with an adequate education. Though some teachers and school staff expressed resentment and anti-American feelings when discussing these children, others were sympathetic and eager to help but still noted that these children strain their already insufficient resources. Even compassionate school staff who had dealt with several Mexican-American children before indicated that they cannot afford to give these students the individualized attention they need. Some fear that their inability to provide them with an adequate learning environment, combined with difficult family situations and the attractiveness of drug cartels in rural areas, is pushing Mexican-American adolescents out of school and into the streets.

As this dissertation shows, communities play a crucial role in the incorporation of Mexican-American children. In areas where migration and return migration are normalized, Mexican-American children are more accepted and receive more support—both from people and institutions. Normalization and support are vital for these children to thrive. The government cannot reasonably alter the transnational social networks in Mexican communities, but it can promote education on the plights of Mexican-American children to prevent discrimination against them.

As binational citizens, Mexican-American children may live their lives on both sides of the border, joining the labor force of Mexico and the US. That is why the Mexican and the

US government must address the educational needs of this population. The current binational program, the Binational Program of Migrant Students (PROBEM), does not address the educational needs of Mexican-American children in Mexico. Some urgent needs are bilingual education and psychological support in schools to help children navigate their international relocation.

The final goal of this dissertation is to highlight the need for more research on transnationalism and the children of return migrants. Two critical issues addressing the structural disadvantages that future research should address are the role of gender and racialization in the process of incorporation. Another crucial issue is the connection between transnationalism, incorporation of the children of returnees, and the life course. It is possible that, at some point, the foreign-born children of returnees decide to go back to their country of birth. What happens to them if and when they go back?